

No. 6264

PUNCH FEBRUARY 22 1961

Vol. CCXL

Punch

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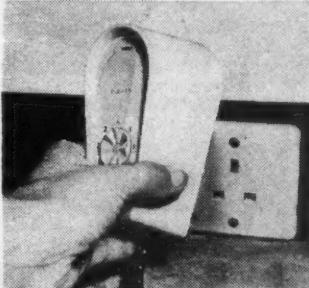
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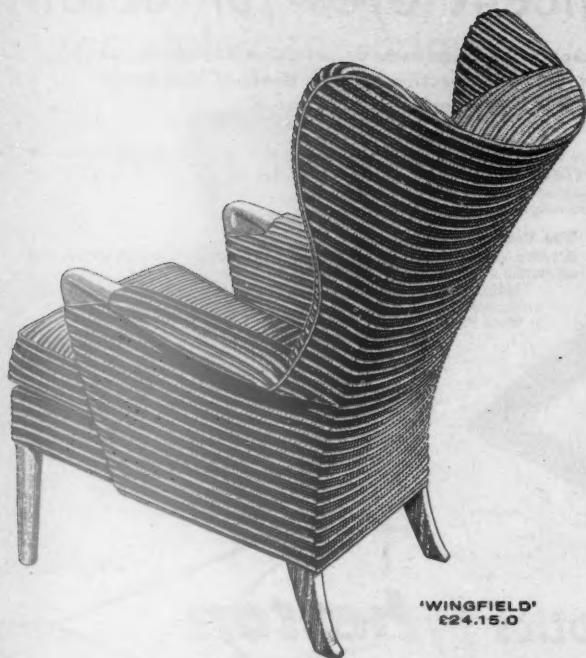
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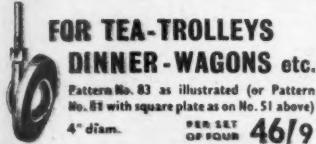


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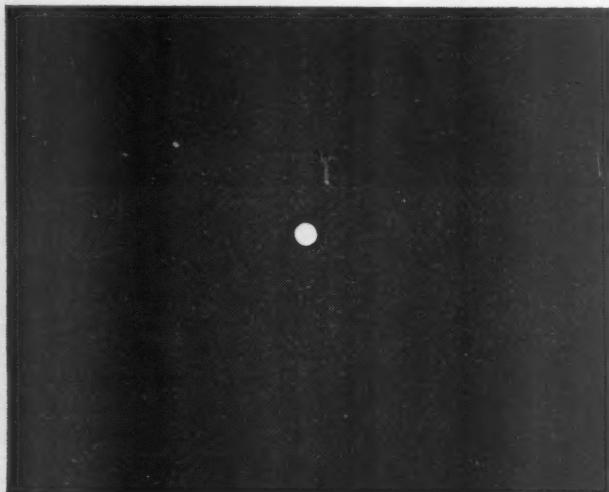


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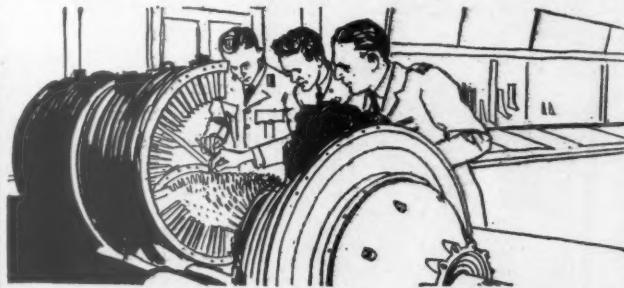
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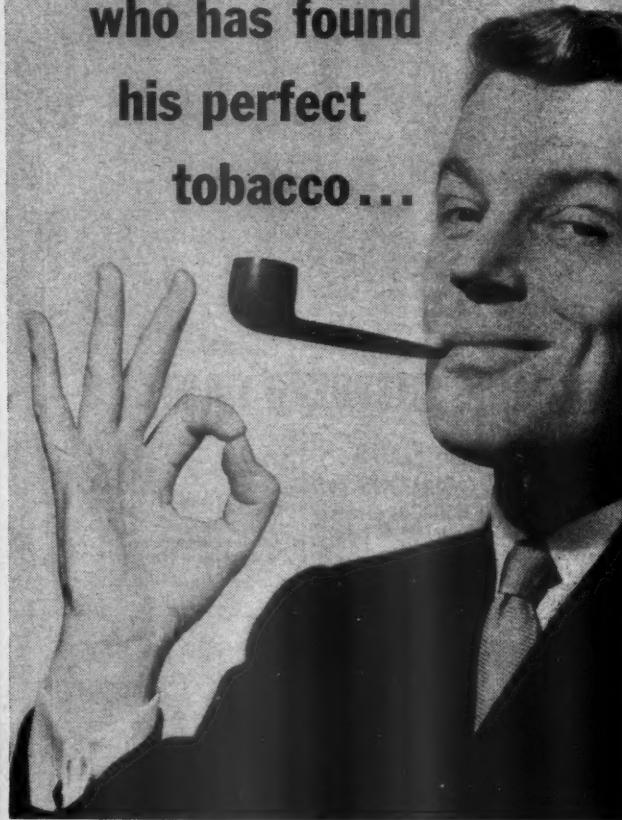
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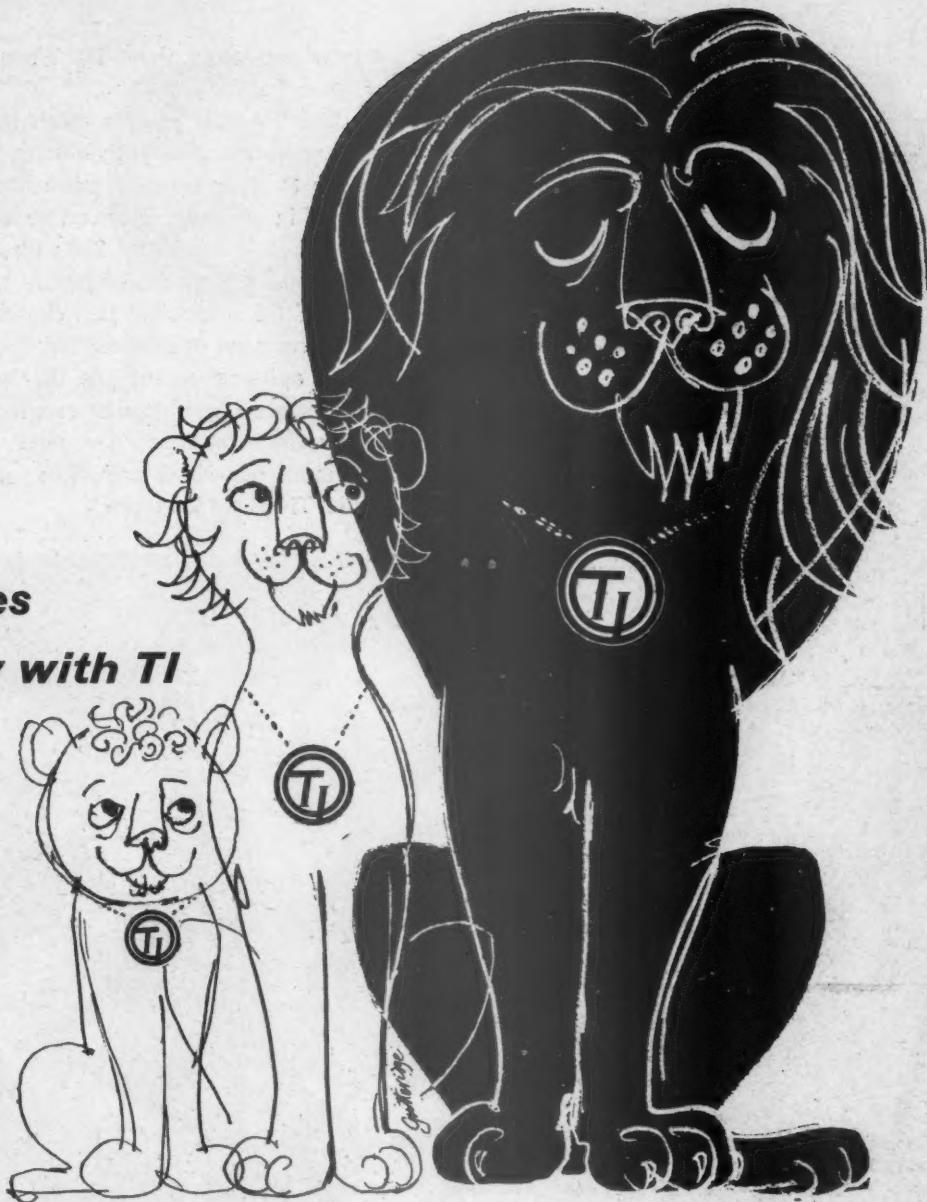
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Edited by
Bernard Hollowood



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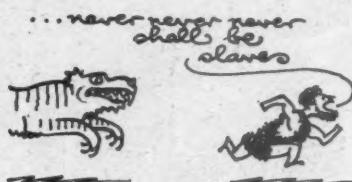
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The London Charivari

THERE is something especially absurd about the award of theoretically competitive prizes to the princes of this world. Last week Prince Philip was presented with a polo pony after being adjudged the best player in an exhibition match at Lahore and President Kennedy got half the Radio and Television Executives' Society gold medal for "outstanding achievement in broadcasting." (Mr. Nixon got the other half.) Though none of the three is a negligible performer in the field for which he got his prize, their excellence lies elsewhere. So in a way the awards are ab surder than those that Nero collected at the great Greek games in A.D. 67, where he competed invincibly. His singing voice was no more than "passable," but at least singing was the thing he was best at.

Heart of Plastic Oak

THE brigadier-general who has shivered the morale of the U.S. Marines by challenging the historical accuracy of their battle hymn may start something bigger. They didn't fight,



he alleged, "from the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli." Come to that, it may not have been at the precise moment when Britain first (at,

it will be recalled, heaven's command) arose from out the azure main that guardian angels started singing the frequently quoted strain "Britons never shall be slaves." I suppose we were more or less slaves to the Romans a good while after this charter had been promulgated.

Whipping-Boy

MR. HAMMARSKJÖLD has had to put up with some hard words



in his time, but the present wave of abuse is getting to be too much. It shouldn't happen to a Dag.

"Goo"—Official

THE *Woman's Mirror* achieved a new ultimate in journalistic enterprise when it announced that it was going to tell the "fascinating, behind-the-news story" of the "chubby bundle of chuckles" who is usually more formally identified as Prince Andrew. "Prince Andrew," a *Woman's Mirror* blurb pointed out, was approaching his first birthday, "Yet little is known about him." He'd better hurry up and speak out if he doesn't want to be misinterpreted.

Welsh Wha Hae

WHAT is the Welsh Tourist and Holiday Board up to, inviting woollen manufacturers to design a



Hollowood

"Say 'Ah!' No, just 'Ah!' I'm not asking for a reasoned criticism of the Tory Health Service . . ."

Welsh kilt? I suspect the hidden hand of the militant Welsh Nationalists. Any day now we shall hear that the people are being secretly armed with bagpipes in preparation for all-out hostilities.

... With the Greatest of Ease

WHEN I read in a lawsuit last week of the trampoline being used in a ballet "to give an effect of ecstasy" I had a momentary flashback of Diaghilev saying to Fokine, "What about working in a slack-wire and trick-bicycle routine, plus a paper-tearing spot, for Nijinsky?" But a music-hall element in ballet isn't as unreasonable as it sounds; the art sprang from a fusion of the work of court dancers, folk dancers, acrobats and tumblers. The original motive for using the tips of the toes was to make it look as if the dancer were a disembodied spirit anxious to leave the ground, and if the trampoline doesn't do that I don't know what does, except the now obsolescent demon king's trap-door apparatus.

Everything in Hatton Garden Lovely

UNDERWORLD spokesmen are delighted to read of the latest in burglar-alarms, officially described as foolproof. Until a burglarproof one comes along they don't propose to start worrying.

Root of All Evil

THE Rand is a nice handy name for the new South African unit of currency ("Lend us a rand, old boy,"

"Five rand each way Lovely Cottage") but it seems a pity that the hundred constituent parts are to be called cents. There are already cents all over the place, and none of them will have the same value as South African ones; a U.S. cent is a bit over three-farthings, an East African cent is an eighth of a penny, a South African cent will be a penny-farthing. Couldn't they be called something more distinctive, like Springboks? And incidentally, I've just noticed that every time I write "rand" I have to check myself from writing "grand," so there may be some misunderstandings there too. (There are two thousand rands in a grand.)

Gute Nacht!

I WAS glad to see Sir Winston's budgerigar described as "a fluent linguist" because he can say good morning in three languages. That puts me right up there with the budgerigars.

Their Own Fault

WHY are so many elderly people in Bournemouth being knocked down in traffic? A member of the town's Accident Prevention Committee puts his finger neatly on the trouble: "When these people were young, traffic was not so fast. *They have not kept pace with the increase in speed*." Not even the spokesmen of the motoring organiza-

<p>In next Week's PUNCH</p> <p>CLIFF'S INN</p> <p>The "Tonight" Team goes Commercial</p> <p>Pop People's Music</p> <p>by CHARLES REID</p>
--

tions could have put it as succinctly as that. Clearly the situation cannot be left as it is. With designers busy on a sports car to do 150-plus, it is high time some of these effete foot passengers began to lick themselves into physical shape. Let's start with compulsory fitness tests for the over-70s.

A Good Example

A NUMBER of Young Conservatives spent a day gathering litter from a bomb-site in London in order to shame the London County Council, a body not easily shamed. The risk is that the Young Socialists will be tempted to dump tins and bottles to keep their adversaries busy; they could score a valuable point, too, by arguing that throwing down litter is more in the British tradition than picking it up. On the whole, though, I like the idea of political litter-gathering. Surely the sit-down strikers who invested Whitehall could have spared some members to clean out the pond in St. James's Park? Surely that ought to shame the Government. And perhaps the Aldermaston demonstrators could clean as they sing as they march?

Deviationist

A DEAD thrush with a Russian ring on its leg was found in a Norfolk churchyard, which shows that the population of Russia is not exclusively obsessed with blazing interplanetary trails. Rather heartening news, really; and I don't want anyone to tell me that the speckles on the bird's breast were microdots.

Isn't London Wonderful?

I HAVE just seen a man walking through Victoria Station singing his hair.

— MR. PUNCH



"Yes, but once men land on the planets they'll need SOME means of transport to get around!"



THE ONLOOKERS

Immediately below the Top People come the Pop People, the men and women in the street who are at the receiving end of mass production. This article, the tenth of a series investigating what these consumers consume, deals with medicine.

POP PEOPLE'S PILLS



By P. M Hubbard

THE Pop Man is not, by definition, the brains of the country, but he is its heart and its belly; and one would not wish to find the heart muted with sedatives and the belly, clogged with stomach-powders. Generally speaking, they are not. For all the money spent on advertising proprietary medicines ("patent" is now for some reason a naughty word) and the total money which people must obviously spend on the stuff itself to make the advertising pay off, the amount that actually goes down the statistically average throat is (if the drug-makers will forgive me) comfortingly small. A duty on pills might be thought no more immoral than a duty on beer, but, moral or not, it would not pay the same.

The Pop Man's household does not—or did not when last recorded—spend more than two shillings a week over the year on doctoring itself, be his little ones never so cough-ridden or constipated. In most cases it spends less. It is the small family that spends the most. The first child, even when joined by others, remains the target for a good deal of parental medication. As the house gets fuller a law of diminishing returns sets in, or more probably Mum, by the time she has washed and dressed and fed them all, has less time to worry about what goes on inside. In any case the average drops sharply, until a household of six spends little more than a household of three.

When we come to the solitary or celibate, we are at once on dangerous ground; but the danger must be faced. It is not the Pop Man who mostly buys the stuff, it is the Pop Woman—and she does not buy it by any means only for her children. As an unmarried but mature and, by definition, independent and fairly comfortably placed woman, she spends seven times as much on her symptoms as the similarly placed bachelor who ought by now to be supporting her. It is difficult to say why this is sad, but to the patronizing male mind it seems so. As the two get older the gap widens still further; but nemesis awaits the bachelor in late middle age, when his presumably gay life (or the habitual meanness which is just as often a concomitant of celibacy) produces symptoms he can no longer overlook, and in next to no time he is dosing himself as persistently as the neglected creature who might now, if he had had the necessary foresight, be his comfort and stay. Let us waste no tears on him. He has been warned, and he was ignoring the proper remedy even while he was, on the whole, resisting the more dubious.

To come back to our household: there is a persistent and no doubt significant connection between the buying of medicine and all the characteristic distinguishing marks of the family on its way up the social ladder. The black-coated worker (still Pop, but going up) pays quite a bit more for remedies than the man who works in overalls. The man who lives in his own house spends more than the mortgagee, who in turn spends more than the council tenant. If Mum went to grammar school, the children, at least while they are young enough to be amenable, get more poured into them than if she pipped her eleven-plus. (If Mum has nerves as well as education, the one or two children her nerves will stand may become perfect little walking pharmacopoeias: but nerves, as everybody knows, are no longer a social prerogative.) It is perhaps the more competitive life which leaves the body in need of repair, or which puts an edge on the mental apprehension of physical trouble. Your self-employed man, poor

devil, spends more on medicines than your office worker; and it will not surprise anyone who knows him that the Midlander, so seldom at peace with himself or his neighbours, doses himself more than the Northerner or the Londoner.

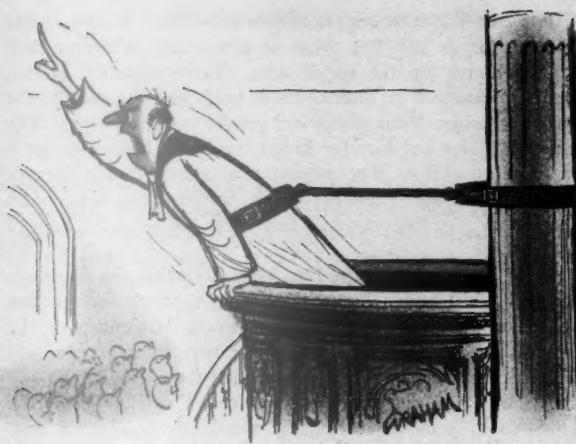
But, you will say (rallying, as you should, to the defence of the educated and socially advanced), this is true only of the stuff a man chooses and buys for himself. Surely self-medication is in itself in some sense a sign of independence and enlightenment. While your educated man and, still more, woman are getting quickly and efficiently from the chemist what they are enlightened enough to know they need, their duller contemporaries are sitting supine in the doctor's waiting-room, secure in the possession of full sick-pay and content to be told what they should, in view of their particular symptoms, spend their statutory shillings on. This, in fact, is the picture the manufacturers themselves rather tend to suggest—an enlightened service to an enlightened public, a weight lifted off the over-burdened shoulders of the National Health Service practitioner and a saving on the nation's medicine bill.

The pity of it is, it does not seem to be true—or not, at any rate, so far as the Pop Man is concerned, whatever may happen higher up the social scale. Self-medication is not, for the individual, an alternative to bothering the doctor; the two go together. Your addict will get the stuff both ways. The man who does not buy for himself will not bother to get a prescription either. The patient who comes to the surgery too late has not generally been wasting his time with proprietary palliatives—he has just neglected himself altogether.

As for the medicines the Pop Man (or rather, for the most part, his wife) buys, they come within a pretty limited and well-defined range. The law lays down strict controls on the ailments for which the manufacturer may offer a cure, and the manufacturers themselves have tied their own hands still further by a voluntary code of practice. The trade is, by the standards of some countries, an excellently conducted one, and contrives impressively to be at once fiercely competitive and uncompromisingly ethical. Leaving out of consideration such border-line products as toothpastes, beauty preparations,



"Whatever was it we got so bored with before we had TV, stereo and home movies?"



health foods, hair lotions, and so on, the Pop Man buys in the main analgesics, laxatives, indigestion remedies, nose, throat and cough mixtures, skin ointments and antiseptics of various external application—and it is after all only the first three of these that find their way generally speaking into his and his family's stomachs.

Aspirins are obviously, along with alcohol, the great national comforter. They are taken with impartial confidence for anaemia, eye-strain, colds and sore throats, diarrhoea, toothache, backache and headache, nerves, rheumatism and arthritis, insomnia, accidental injury and the menstrual disorders of women. There is, to common observation, no stigma attaching to their consumption—rather the reverse. Laxatives are consumed, as they are harvested, in private, and only the real enthusiast will boast of the number of indigestion tablets he has taken since breakfast; but aspirins can be consumed in public with something of the same curious panache as attaches to the consumption of alcohol. This is, in particular, an addiction of the middle years, with women, perhaps legitimately, leading the men by a comfortable margin. But it is surprising, and mildly alarming, how many children help to swell the figures of national consumption. By the fifties the peak is passed, whether because the average man has acquired greater endurance or because by this time his symptoms demand more specific treatment.

The tranquillizers and pep-pills which, to judge from some press reports, would seem to form the staple diet of large sections of the population, do not figure largely in the shopping list of the Pop Man and his family. For one thing, the pills with any significant effect are, or are soon brought, under medical control and therefore off our present beat. For another, their use was always largely restricted to a more or less lunatic fringe, from students engaged in failing examinations to members of the Chelsea Set trying to live it up, or down, according to their momentary needs and inclinations: and even here the concomitant symptoms of alcoholism and malnutrition are often overlooked in assessing their effects. In the Pop Man's set aspirin is the tranquillizer and alcohol the pep-pill.

Indigestion powders, mercifully, are still almost entirely

for adult consumption. Cough and cold remedies are common to all ages, with a preponderance, as might be expected, among the very young. Among the adults many throat troubles are accepted with resignation as due to smoking and left untreated. Ointments are spread evenly and fairly thickly over the entire family, but it is mainly the grown-ups who go in for mouth-washes and external antiseptics.

It is the laxatives and health-salts that most nearly assume the proportions and characteristics of a personal vice. Here if anywhere the ethicalness of much of the advertising seems questionable, and this is almost certainly merely because the doctors seem only comparatively recently to have begun to take serious stock of the damage that may result. Whatever the psychological affinities of constipation—and they seem on reflection to carry much more rather sinister conviction than many similar speculations—there is no doubt that the physical condition is often a self-induced one. A writer in the *British Medical Journal*, quoting an earlier article by a colleague, talks of "the unfortunate end result of abusing the child's bowel with laxatives: 'That familiar sight of the hospital wards, the patient whose life is centred round the problem of when his bowels can next be blasted into reluctant activity.' " And the facts proclaim the extent of the mischief. Nine-tenths of the laxatives given to the children, and nearly half those taken by the adults, are taken not because the taker is constipated but, as the poet says, lest he should be by-and-by. And the habit, once acquired, is passed on. One investigation elicited the horrifying fact that one child in every five was getting its regular weekly dose before reaching its fifth birthday. Pop Men's families of every type seem to be addicted to a considerable extent, though it is the skilled manual workers, partly sedentary of habit but not highly educated, who are the worst offenders. But of course it is the mothers who do the dosing.

The trouble here seems to lie in that half-conscious psychosomatic borderland which is peculiarly susceptible to the persuasions of the man with something to sell. The yearning to be purged of all impurity goes very deep, and in a religious age might find other outlets. As it is, inward purification means, to the Pop Man and his wife, a scoured-out bowel, which he is persuaded is somehow necessary to his salvation, and which he dare not leave to chance.

It is for the doctors to give a clearer lead here. The industry is, as I have said, on the whole a public-spirited one, and could be expected to take note of the medical view. Once it is generally understood that a dose of salts a day does not, any more than an apple, keep the doctor away, but may on the contrary make work for him sooner or later, the priority of inner cleanliness may be expected to be less strenuously advocated.

But laxatives apart, the Pop Man shows no sign of indulging his increasing prosperity by over-dosing himself. The tendency of the more mentally active to pay more attention to their physical state may, after all, be not wholly unhealthy; and it is reasonable to hope (though as yet the point does not seem to have been investigated) that as the Pop Man moves into the top class a growing enlightenment will restore a proper balance.

Next week: Pop People's Music

Rearranging the Universe

By CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

Arguing about how the world started is a party political game

LEAN, six-foot Professor Ryle (42) (£3,600) has, reports our correspondent, discovered the universe. Attractive 25-year-old Mrs. Patricia Leslie, who has spent the past eight years listening to the stars, also helped.

There are now, it seems, three schools of thought about the universe, which might be thought to correspond roughly with the Conservative party, the Liberal and the Socialist party. There is the Conservative view which says that we live in a Static Universe—what they call a steady state. The universe, they tell us, looks the same from anywhere (Mr. Nabarro). "The same as what?" Loud laughter). It has always looked the same and we have never had it so good—at least for the past ten thousand million years. Then there is the more left-wing view that we live in an expanding universe. It all began, it seems, quite a long time ago not with a whimper but with a bang, and it has been expanding ever since. "We have jolly well got to keep up with the universe," says Mr. George Brown. "In the League Table of galaxies," says Mr. Harold Wilson, "we come bottom but two. That is not good enough." What is more, there is another big bang coming, when matter which came out of gas will go back to gas again, in another thousand million years or so. "What is the Gas Board doing about that?" asks Lord Hinchinbrooke. "We must become galaxy-minded," says Mr. Woodrow Wyatt, "and it would be disastrous if an apathetic electorate should allow this complacent Government to remain in power until then. There is no time to lose." But there is a third school of thought, which says that the universe neither expands all the time nor does it remain steady. It sometimes expands and it sometimes contracts—In-Out-In-Out, like the people doing physical jerks, or the Bank Rate, or hire-purchase restrictions. Just at the moment it happens to be expanding, but there is no knowing what it may do in four years' time if Mr. Kennedy should not be re-elected.

Now the trouble of course is that

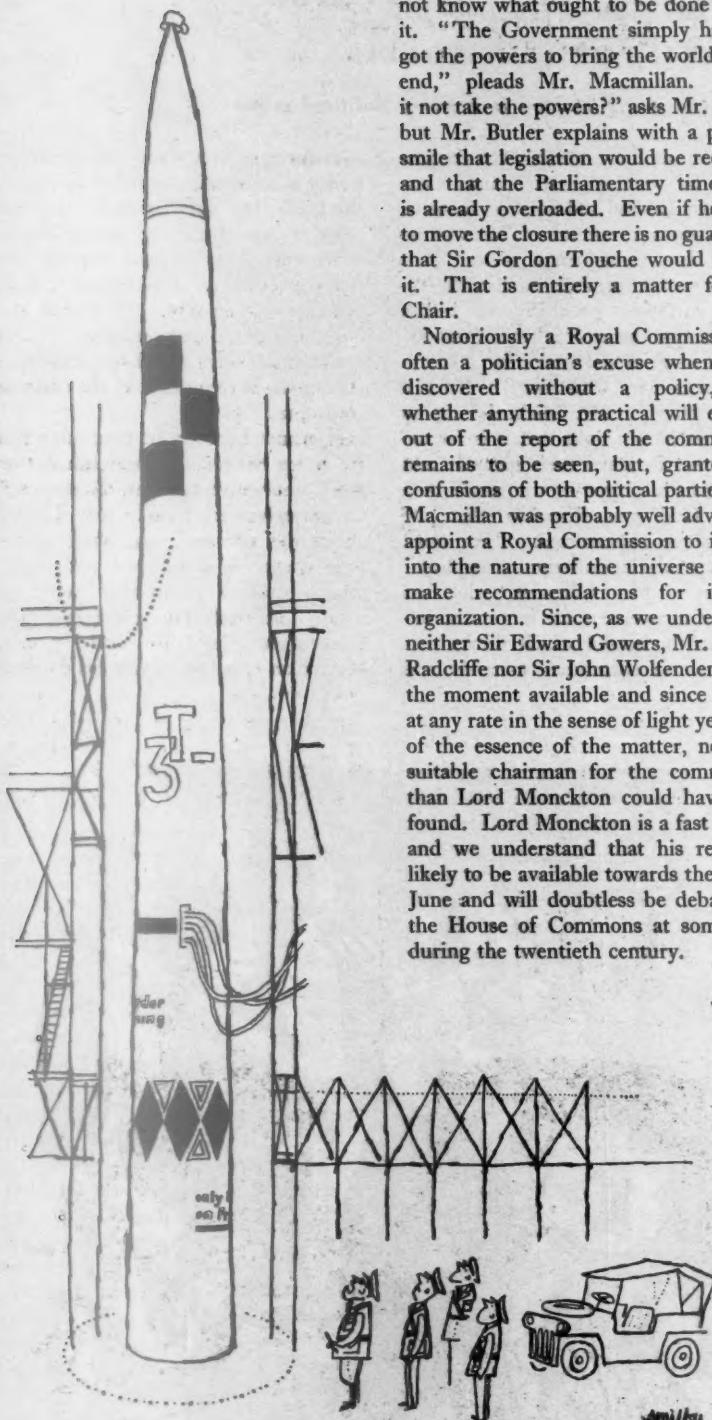
although, as I say, these three theories might be roughly described as Conservative, Liberal and Socialist theories, yet divisions of opinion on them by no means run along party lines. The Socialists, for instance, so recently reunited in their opposition to the health charges, find themselves bitterly divided on the issue of the universe. "Let it rip," says Mr. Crosland. "Take a chance on it." Mr. Michael Foot on the other hand thinks that it is far too dangerous to leave such gigantic and monopolistic power in the hands of a single God and demands that the universe be nationalized. "We must bring the galaxies under public control," he says. Mr. Gaitskell, who has recently recovered from laryngitis, belongs to the school which thinks that the universe sometimes expands and

sometimes contracts and that the wisest policy is for the Government to correct the imbalance, supporting the universe when it is contracting and selling it short when it shows signs of expanding too dangerously. "We must not be doctrinaire," he says. "We must suit our policy to the circumstances." "The question is," says Mr. Foot, "shall we control the universe or shall the universe control us?"

It cannot honestly be pretended that views are noticeably more clear-cut on the Conservative benches. Back-bench Conservatives are frankly very worried about the universe, but there seems little chance of a coherent and determined pressure group that would be willing seriously to embarrass the Government on this issue. Mr. Macmillan candidly admits his concern



"I'm afraid all the stairs are occupied, Susan. D'you mind chairs?"



"Damn and blast all undergraduates."

but as candidly confesses that he does not know what ought to be done about it. "The Government simply has not got the powers to bring the world to an end," pleads Mr. Macmillan. "Can it not take the powers?" asks Mr. Paget, but Mr. Butler explains with a patient smile that legislation would be required and that the Parliamentary time-table is already overloaded. Even if he were to move the closure there is no guarantee that Sir Gordon Touche would accept it. That is entirely a matter for the Chair.

Notoriously a Royal Commission is often a politician's excuse when he is discovered without a policy, and whether anything practical will emerge out of the report of the commission remains to be seen, but, granted the confusions of both political parties, Mr. Macmillan was probably well advised to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the nature of the universe and to make recommendations for its re-organization. Since, as we understand, neither Sir Edward Gowers, Mr. Justice Radcliffe nor Sir John Wolfenden are at the moment available and since time—at any rate in the sense of light years—is of the essence of the matter, no more suitable chairman for the commission than Lord Monckton could have been found. Lord Monckton is a fast worker and we understand that his report is likely to be available towards the end of June and will doubtless be debated by the House of Commons at some time during the twentieth century.

On the Notice-Board . . .

of the Blaghouse and Grimsdyke Co-operative Stores
B. & G.C.S. AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY

GREETINGS, fellow-Thespians! This broadsheet is to inform one and all of a distinguished addition to our artistic ranks and a glad-some change in our financial position.

As our zealous Secretary, Miss Edna Comstock (Bedding), announced at the A.G.M., our Production Fund had only £4 17s. 3d. in hand, and there were grave doubts whether we would be able to mount our autumn performance of *Hamlet*, *Prince of Denmark* in the manner to which culture-lovers in Blaghouse and Grimsdyke have become accustomed.

It is now most gratifying to report that our popular new Manager, Mr. G. J. Steamaker, who took up his appointment last week, is a keen Knight of the Buskin and has honoured us by joining our Society. Not only has Mr. Steamaker already paid his annual subscription—shame on you other Laggards of the Lucre, says our worthy Treasurer, Miss Marlene Griggs (Hardware), jokingly—but he has also donated the sum of £25 (twenty-five pounds) to our Production Fund.

I take this opportunity to say a public thank-you to our timely benefactor, and know that all Comrades of the Greasepaint in our Society will join me in paraphrasing the Immortal Bard and crying "Welcome to Blaghouse and Grimsdyke, best of comfort and ever welcome to us, Mr. G. J. Steamaker, Mrs. Steamaker and your charming daughter Evadne!"

HAROLD GLIMBERRY
(Soft Furnishings)
Chairman, B. & G.C.S.A.D.S.

SPECIAL PRODUCTION NOTE

The following alterations are announced in the cast of *Hamlet* as agreed at the A.G.M.:

Hamlet: Delete Harold Glimberry
Insert Mr. G. J. Steamaker

Queen Gertrude:
Delete Miss Edna Comstock
Insert Mrs. G. J. Steamaker

Ophelia: Delete Miss Marlene Griggs
Insert Miss Evadne Steamaker



Our Man in America

P. G. WODEHOUSE covers more than the waterfront

QUIET a nip in the air there has been of late on this side of the Atlantic, and it is getting so that ducks have to watch their step when they settle down to get their eight hours. A Hempstead, Long Island, duck turned in as usual the other night on top of the water at the Hempstead Point Lookout Marina, and no one more surprised than it when it woke next morning to find itself embedded in ice. It took John Cohane, a marina watchman, and Bernie Beisswetter, a watchman at the town park across the street, quite a time to reach it in a boat, chopping the ice away en route. They thawed the bird out by propping it up against the radiator, and towards lunch time it left, cursing a bit as was natural but in fairly good shape.

A dull story, yes, but it brings us neatly to the subject of President Kennedy. Nobody would accuse President Kennedy of not having the welfare of the American nation at heart, for it so happens that if there is one thing he has at heart, it is that welfare. He is all for it. Nevertheless, a feeling is growing that in this sub-zero weather we are having he is doing the common people no good by going about without a hat.

When the flyers released by the Russians arrived and he met them at the airport with nothing on top of him but his hair, fifty million television viewers caught nasty colds in the head. Shivers ran down fifty million spines, "Br-r-r-rs" were uttered in fifty million homes, and steaming toddies were called for in every state in the union except Florida, California and Hawaii. We are still sneezing.

All right, of course, if he had gone into a commercial for some rheum remedy containing the magic ingredient X47, but he didn't. He just stood there, and opinion throughout the

nation is sharply divided. His democratic supporters argue that a President who hasn't a hat can't talk through it, which you have to admit, they say, is a good thing, but Republicans, particularly the ultra-conservative right wing, take the view that a man who feels no need to keep the bean warm during the current cold snap must be a hothead, and this alarms them, for you never know what hotheads won't be up to next.

The whole question is very moot.

Chimpanzees are in the news just now. One is not thinking so much of Ham, the one who got so much publicity of the right sort by going up in the space rocket, as of Fudgie, Pudgie and Bobby, who clocked in to work the other day at the furniture factory of Mr. Ben Friedman in Houston, Texas,

their job being to stuff foam rubber into pillows, put beds into cartons and attach legs to chairs. They have an hour off for lunch and a fifteen-minute banana break in the morning.

"A couple of years ago," says Mr. Friedman, "I watched a movie showing humans drearily working on a conveyor belt, and they looked miserable. Animals could do this, I thought, and they would enjoy it."

He expects no trouble from the International Upholsterers' Union, with which he has a contract prohibiting him from hiring a non-union man, because the chimpanzees are not non-union men. And in every other respect the situation looks pretty bright to him. Chimpanzees, he points out, will not be distracted by inner emotional conflicts, and as they are vegetarians and nudists they will be able to ignore the cost-of-living index.

"It seems to me they should be ideal employees," he says.

An admirable suggestion has been made by Mr. Wilfred S. Rowe, a season-ticket holder on one of the local railways whose trains saunter towards New York each day and generally fetch up there sooner or later, though, as Mr. Rowe says, it is a fact of life that there is no relationship between



"I got a few more manufacturers' samples this morning—let's try them."

time tables and train movements. His idea, simple as all great ideas are, is to establish a bookie at each station, prepared to accept commissions from the customers, who would queue up delightedly to wager on how late a given train would be and/or the elapsed time between Sunny Heights and the New York terminus.

Heated arguments with other betters would help pass the time, and the daily take at the betting window would soon put the old road back on its financial feet. And the spectacle of a mob of eager travellers in grey flannel suits with brief cases in their hands running beside the train and shouting "Come on, Steve!" to the engine driver could not fail to strike a lively note.

I have commented before on the new spirit of courtesy which is making life in the United States so pleasant for one and all, and another example of this has come to hand. Three visitors to a night-club recently came out at the conclusion of the floor show to find parking summonses dangling from their wind-screen wipers. They were naturally annoyed and muttered words which would better have been left unuttered, but their pique vanished when they saw that on each of the summonses was written the legend:

"Season's greetings from your favourite policeman."



Golden Sunset for Private Eyes

WHEN I was a private eye working for J. B. Pumpernickel's agency in Holborn I never had much fun. "There's a Mrs. Wilson," J.B. would say, buying himself a sip of coffee, "said to be having an affair with a bus conductor," and there, after a few more details, I would be, riding a No. 15 to and fro until I could have screamed at the sight of Piccadilly Circus. Or I might be out at Streatham, watching an upstairs window with my coat collar turned up for a matter of four or five hours and nothing to show for it but a scribbled note "Lights out 11.30 p.m." It was all small-time, you see. If J.B. had called me in one morning and said to me "Get out to Hatfield House right away. Start decorating the west wing. Get yourself a job as under-footman. Play it any way you like, but if any Russians call or the Marquess starts singing the Internationale in his bath ring me right away. Understand?"—honestly, if I'd ever had an assignment like that, I'd still be in the business to-day.

This General John Grombach, head of Industrial Reports, Inc. . . . but there again I've just got to break off

and listen to the music. *General John Grombach, head of Industrial Reports, Inc.!* The sort of caller that used to come on the line in our top-floor Holborn dump would generally begin "Pumpernickel's? Well, look. Remember that bit of info we got you on the woman lost her labrador pup—this is Bright's of Birmingham, by the way. Righty?—well, here's a little something you could do for us, quid pro and usual exes. A green plastic handbag has been mislaid . . ." No style in it, nothing to rouse you. Put me back on that 'phone this minute and let me hear a real American voice, deep but kind of crisp, say "This is General John Grombach, head of Industrial Reports Inc. Would you be interested in trailing a couple of red dukes?" and I give you my word I'd have my feet off the desk in a twinkling, whether J.B. looked in to see who it was or not. But we never seemed to get the breaks in my day. No mansion-watching for Pumpernickel's. We used to think things were looking up if it wasn't semi-detached.

It's not a matter of snobbery, mind. Anybody likes to think he's doing an important job in the world, and my guess is I'd get the feeling a deal easier keeping tabs on a bit of a V.I.P. like this Lord Exeter or even an M.P. like Mr. Osborne than trailing round after some middle-aged missus whose husband thinks she's frittering the house-keeping on the dogs. "I kept the Archbishop under observation and saw him hand a brown paper parcel to Mr. Y . . ." You've got the basis of a report there that any man would be glad to write, particularly if he knew it was scheduled for the eye of the great Grombach, head of Industrial Reports, Inc. And then there's the amenities. People don't realize. "I took up my position in the shrubbery"—if I've written that once for old J.B. I suppose I've written it a hundred times. And what did the shrubbery amount to? One damned variegated laurel and a couple of half-grown lilacs. You'd have none of that at Chatsworth or Houghton Hall. A bit of proper cover, you'd get, with rhododendrons and

maybe an enormous yew hedge commanding the lower ground floor windows. It wouldn't surprise me if up at Burghley House there weren't a rotunda or two where you could watch the Chinese coming and going in comfort. See what I mean? A private eye wants somewhere where he can be private.

Another thing about this assignment General Grombach is said to have thrown right in the lap of the Anglo-American Detective Agency (Gerrard 4088, if anybody wants an earl watched; ask for Mr. Charles Chrystall), it's dead easy. What I mean is, you know for a start you aren't going to find any real evidence of red sympathies in a couple of respectable Conservative gents, so you needn't be afraid of missing anything. You can have a bit of shut-eye now and again without falling down on the job, and still put in a pretty decent report. Little items are bound to crop up sooner or later: Lord Exeter pausing opposite a piece of Ming in the British Museum, Mr. Osborne patting a peke in an unguarded moment—you don't need anything sensational when American generals are looking for Communist links. Give me ten minutes with a sacked housemaid and I'd guarantee to dig up something a shade bamboo about Mr. Macmillan even; associated openly in the nineteen-twenties with people who published a book about Peking very likely. It's a cinch, as we say.

It can't last, of course, this golden age for private eyes. Already there's Mr. Osborne, who's practically pledged to support a free hand for private enterprise, going about complaining that his house has been watched. "I myself have seen nothing of these detectives," he says ("That is what you may expect to see," I hear Mr. Charles Chrystall murmuring, "when the Anglo-American Agency is watching you"); "but I want the Government to put a stop to this sort of thing." Put a stop to it, eh? One moment he is praising the profession for doing its job unostentatiously and the next he wants to take the bread-and-butter out of its mouth. I suppose the long and short of it will be we shall soon have a law making it a crime to stand about in shrubberies and watch other people's windows.

Call that freedom? Why, even in China they're doing it all the time.

— H. F. E.

"Oh dear! Time-Life circulation department is angry with me."



Prep-School Miracles

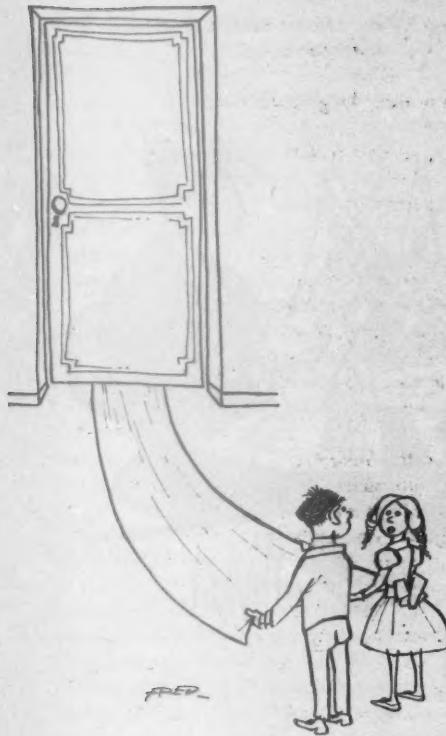
By RICHARD USBORNE

LAKE had six toes on his left foot. Apart from the great Miracle excitement, I remember nothing about Lake except his boot-hole number (52) and his six toes. When, recently, the compiler of the School Register sent round a note to some keen Old Boys asking if they knew the whereabouts of a dozen or so near contemporaries whose addresses he couldn't locate, I noticed Lake's name on the list. I wrote to the compiler and said he ought to circularize teaching hospitals. Lake might have perished, and it was possible that he had willed his left foot to Science, and a Lake Bequest might be discovered in the Anatomy School at St. Mary's, the Charing Cross or the Middlesex. If so, an obituary might be worked out for the Register.

But this is about Miracles. One day, while practising golf in the Break,

Curtis *ma.* sliced his drive off the third tee, and the ball went whistling just over Lake's head as he walked in front of Mr. Marsh, the English master, on the avenue separating the two playing fields. Curtis *ma.* got an awful ticking off from Mr. Marsh for not shouting "Fore!" and was made to go indoors and put his clubs away and not play golf again for a week.

Now Mr. Marsh was a poet, and later became a novelist. He was a great admirer of W. B. Yeats, and used to visit him. He read Yeats's poetry to the Fifth out of books inscribed by Yeats. I learnt later that he was very much interested in the experiments in telepathy that Yeats, A. E. Gilbert Murray, Bridges and others were conducting about then, trying to pass their thoughts from England to Ireland, testing mediums and all that. Those boys who slept in dormitories at his house



sometimes got Mr. Marsh to tell them ghost stories in bed. He had one story about a face at a window that he would only tell on Sunday mornings (extra hour in bed) before we got up. If he had told us this one at night, he'd have scared us so much that we wouldn't have slept.

Some time shortly after the Curtis-Lake golf ball episode, we heard a rumour that Mr. Marsh had said Lake's life had been saved by a miracle, and that he, Mr. Marsh, had seen a ghostly hand appear above Lake's head to press it down while the golf ball whizzed over it. I don't know if anybody dared to confirm this with Mr. Marsh. But it was good enough for us that a miracle had occurred, and I for one thought it good for me to be at the school and to know Lake and Mr. Marsh. I couldn't decide whether it was good for me to know Curtis *ma.* In any case I didn't know him very well, though Curtis *mi.* was my best friend and his boot-hole number was 112 and mine was 111. I took to bowing to the altar in Chapel before sliding in along the pew to my seat, and when going out after the service.

Next hole was Christmas, and someone gave me a bow and arrows. The bow was a gorgeously whippy affair, and it shot the arrows (as I remember my kid sister saying) "absolutely high." The arrows had feathers on them, professional jobs. They hadn't got the short of V-shaped, barbed arrowheads that I liked drawing and that I felt the English had used at Crécy, but they ended in a metal tip shaped like a stumpily sharpened pencil. I could shoot them so that they'd stick deep in the yew tree, and they might have split a peeled wand if I'd known what a peeled wand was and had hit one in the middle. I was practising high shooting on the lawn one afternoon when my mother was out and my sister (aged 4.3) was in my charge. I shot an arrow to what seemed a sky-scraping height, and then I noticed that my sister was ambling across the lawn in the direction of where the arrow was going to fall. It eventually zipped through the skirt of her mackintosh, and pegged her, to her surprise, to the ground till she managed to yank the mackintosh up off the feathers. It didn't worry her, but it made me feel very groggy. Another six inches and (I was sure, and am still sure) it would have gone into her skull.

It is conceivable that, in the next twenty years, if a psychiatrist had put me through the hoops under hypnosis, he might have found this incident cannoning about in my subconscious, traumatically unatoned, nightmare material. My sister was too young to know what had nearly happened. I told my mother when she came home, but, perhaps as well for her, couldn't get her to see anything beyond the tiresome necessity of mending the hole in the mackintosh. I think what I needed more than anything was to be enormously punished, so that some anguishing pain in my behind, or assault on my *amour propre*, would drain off the guilt and terror that pressed on my conscience. A dozen years later, when I was doing Greats at Oxford, I had to do an essay on Bradley's Theory of Punishment, and I produced this story of the arrow through my sister's mackintosh. It seemed to me more vivid than the examples that Bradley gave in that footnote on the left-hand page (I've sold my Bradley and can't check now; but I know it was a footnote, and I know

it was a left-hand page). The Master of Balliol sat and poked the fire for a minute or two after I'd finished reading my essay, and then congratulated me on having got my teeth into the problem very well. It was the only time any of my tutors praised a Philosophy essay of mine.

I did, or my self-repairing mind did, get some relief from the guilt-feeling when, next term at school, I had a personal miracle story to set against the Lake/golf ball/ghostly hand one. I said, and I came to believe as near as makes no matter, that a hand, draped in white, had appeared in the air above my sister's head and had deflected the arrow. I don't think I said it was clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful. But I'd been reading that Tennyson thing, and had seen a Dulac picture of the arm rising from the lake (or mere) to catch Excalibur, and I expect that helped. The Usborne miracle didn't excite the comment in the school that the Lake miracle had, but it was not through want of my telling about it.

But then someone else came on the scene with a miracle story. McConnell *ma.*, it seemed, had been rock-climbing in the hole, and had slipped and fallen towards certain death, but that a ghostly hand had caught him and lifted him back to the *aiguille*, *coulisse* or whatnot from which he had slipped. I have a very clear picture of this event, and I think, once again, that most of it comes from pictures in books. Wasn't one of the characters in *Eric or Little By Little* stranded all night on a wave-whipped rock? That's the picture I have of McConnell *ma.*, though the hand and the rock-face may, for me, also be partly limned from a Doré picture of the Flood in Genesis. In that Doré picture there are a lot of naked bodies thrashing around in the waters near a rock to which many others are clinging huddled, and someone in the water is lifting up, by the small of her back, towards rock-based rescuers, a candidly female figure: possibly the wife of the self-sacrificing chap in the water. McConnell *ma.*, whose boot-hole number was 18, was a saintly boy, popular with masters, and his Bible was full of velvet and leather markers, leaflets of "*lectiones*," christening certificates, pressed violets and all sorts of other aids to holy reading and thinking.

It seemed to me very likely that, if

someone as saintly as McConnell *ma.* had slipped off a dangerous rock, a ghostly hand *would* have lifted him back. I wasn't so convinced that I was equally miracle-prone. Jameson came back to school a year later with two fingers missing from his left hand. He had had an accident with a gun, and, though it may have been a miracle that he hadn't blown his head off, there was no talk of any ghostly hand deflecting the shot from his fingers. But Jameson was an earthy type, and nobody, least of all himself, would have expected supernatural intervention to save his fingers. He was said to be able to hold his breath longer than anybody who'd ever been in the school. Socially it was to his credit in the school that he shot in the holidays, but perhaps the miracle-craze had died out by the time of his accident.

I see from the Register that Jameson was killed in the War. McConnell *ma.* died while an undergraduate at Cambridge, which rounds off the Rupert Brooke-ish brand-image I always had of him. Lake, for the purposes of the Register is, as I say, missing. My sister is well, at the moment of going to press, and so am I.

Quandong Song

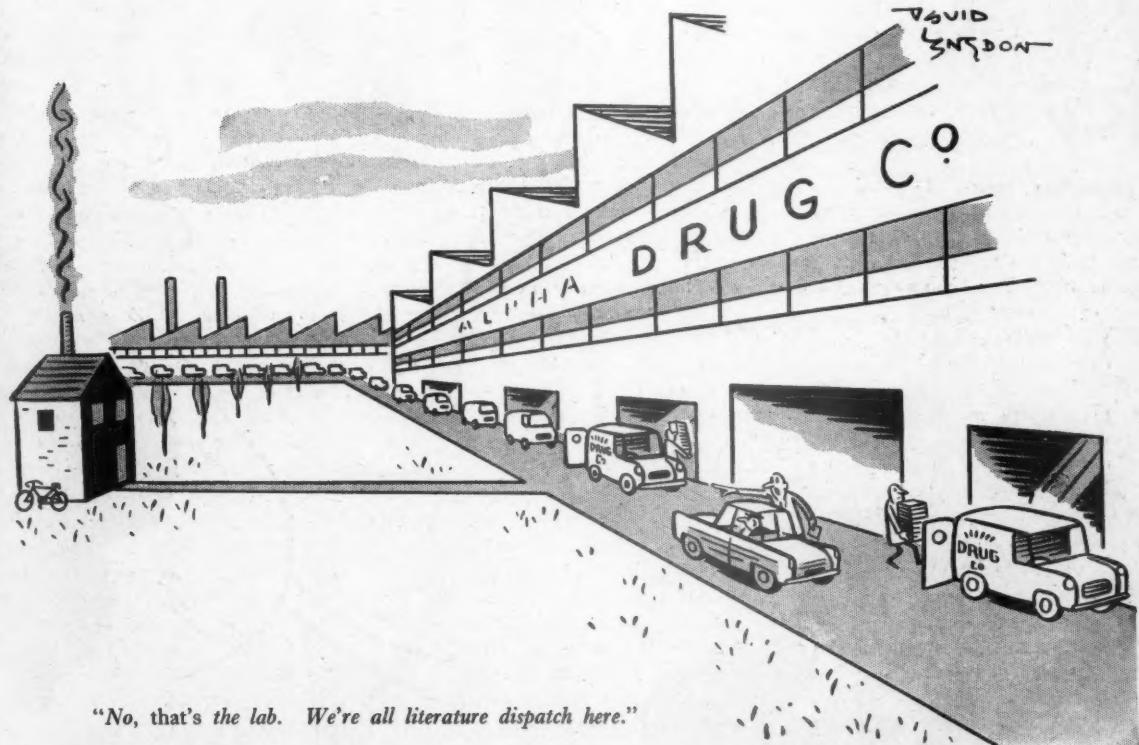
COME down to Q in quandong time!
It isn't far from P—
Pass quagmire, quahog, quamash too
Ere Quinquagesima is due,
And we shall have a rendezvous
Before it's time for tea!

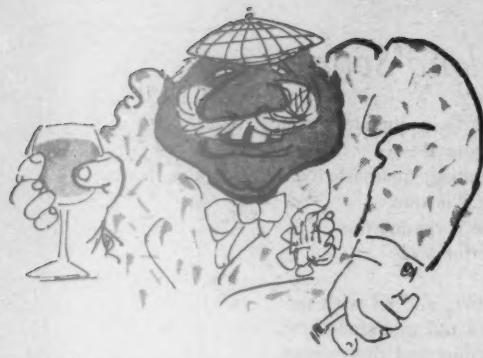
Then come, my love, and sit with me
Beneath the quaint old quandong tree,
Whose fruit, delicious and drupaceous,
Droops from the branches santalaceous,
And whose seed, though scarcely credible,
Contains a kernel also edible!

The quandong grows in far Australia;
Yet we will hold our Saturnalia
Near *quand même*, this side of *quant*,
Where we shall quickly quench our want,
And if of quantity you query
I'll quote for you the quantum the'ry.

So *quoad hoc* and *quid pro quo*
Let's quit all quiddity and go!
Our quondam cares aside we'll fling
While queues of quasi-quires shall sing
Our quizzical, quixotic song,
And bells shall ring Quanding! Quandong!

— JEAN SEWELL STANDISH





"This 'll melt your eyeballs."

Cheers!

By FFOLKES



"Not during Lent, my boy."



"I said the '08!"



"One ginger beer, please."



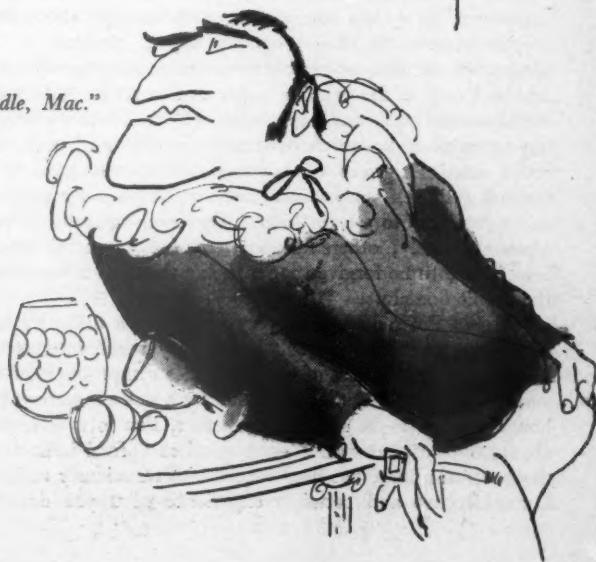
"In a tankard, Rosie."



"Too much lemon!"



One A
four st



Mediatrics

Or the care of the Middle-aged

By H. F. ELLIS

**9. Answers to Correspondents—
Manners in Middle Age—
The Pyjama Trauma**

IT was not to be expected that an attempt to write a "popular" introduction to the science of mediiatrics would fail to excite a certain amount of comment, much of it abusive. Middle age, like humour and sex, is a subject upon which every man over forty considers himself to be an expert—even, curiously, if his main concern is to prove to himself that he has not yet reached it.

Sorting through my correspondence (and disregarding for the moment a considerable batch of letters from reactionary medical colleagues, nearly all of which begin "Nothing but harm can result") I find an almost exact statistical balance between those readers who agree with the diagnostic symptoms of middle age mentioned from time to time in these papers but deny that they themselves exhibit any of them, and those who admit that they have the symptoms but deny that those symptoms have any connection with middle age. Both groups present an almost equally serious problem to the mediatrist, for the root trouble in each case is non-acceptance, and as I said in the opening paper in this series "admission is an essential preliminary to treatment." But before attempting to tackle it I want first to dispose of a third, and very much smaller, group of correspondents who have been startled into self-analysis and are not yet too far gone in self-satisfaction to ask for help. To some, naturally, I have replied privately; others raise matters of such general interest that I hope to be forgiven for bringing them, as it were, into the public domain.

J.M., of Petersfield, puts very succinctly a difficulty that may have troubled many. "I was very much interested," he writes, "in your list of characteristics symptomatic of the various phases of middle age. But I am not altogether clear how these are to be regarded, whether, that is to say, they should be accepted with a quiet mind as normal indications that a certain phase has been reached, or tenaciously resisted. I am fifty-two and certainly experience what you describe

(M.M. III) as a 'feeling of surprised nausea when school contemporaries get knighthoods.' Is this something to be fought against?"

To J.M.'s general question it is not possible to give a quick, categorical answer. We have to discriminate. Nobody who has followed these papers with proper care will suppose for an instant that a symptom of middle age *as such* is to be resisted, given that it arises naturally. The first lesson of mediiatrics is that middle age, as the prime and pride of life, is to be welcomed, and its successive brand marks are to be greeted, no less, with a quiet acceptance such as one accords to a new type of marmalade at breakfast. It would be madness, to take a simple example, to "fight against" a certain patting of the pockets in the search for spectacles or tobacco that first becomes marked in the age-group 46-50. All else apart there is no other way of finding the damned things. What must be taken in hand and wherever possible eradicated are the symptoms not simply of middle age but of the *defects* of middle age—pomposity, obstinacy, refusal to face facts, roguishness, dribbling pipe-stems, tax dodging and the rest. The distinction may sometimes seem to be a fine one but it is there. For an illustration, observe any stream of men presenting their season tickets at the barrier at Waterloo or Victoria. There is a difference, is there not, between the method adopted by, let us say, the under-thirties and the over thirty-fives—a quick upward flick by the younger men, casually executed with the ticket held between first and second fingers, as compared with the less exuberant thumb-and-four-fingers, palm-twisted-slightly-outwards presentation of their elders. Good. We have here a perfectly normal progression from the self-conscious man-about-township of youth to the more becoming preoccupation of E.M. II or III. But to the careful observer a further distinction *within the ranks of the older men* will become apparent. Now and again some passenger, probably of M.M. I grading or thereabouts, will be seen to slip two fingers into the right-hand waistcoat pocket when within two paces of the inspector, whip the ticket out on the next stride, present it when exactly opposite with a curious arrested jerk



"Oh, by the way, darling, a young woman has just joined the queue wearing the most delicious little outfit—she has a high-crowned black fur hat with . . ."



"Isn't that the fellow who paints miniatures?"

at about shoulder level (the ticket being held horizontally with the thumb beneath and two fingers supporting the upper edge, rather in the manner in which colour transparencies are held to the light), and then snap it back into the waistcoat on the fourth stride. This is a symptom of self-conscious efficiency, perhaps the most dangerous and difficult of all the maladies of middle life. There is little hope for the man who fails to strangle it at birth. Before he knows where he is he will be answering the telephone, even at home, with a brisk "Jacobs here!" and keeping cost-per-mile accounts for his wife's car.

To J.M.'s specific question about knighthoods and nausea the answer, it should now be clear, is No.

R.S. (Ipswich) writes "my wife has drawn my attention to what she describes as a 'curious golloping noise' when I am drinking tea, and complains that this recently acquired habit is blurring her picture of the man she married. I should say myself, now that I have been made aware of it, that the noise most closely resembles the drawing of both wellington-clad feet in quick succession out of not very tenacious mud, but the point I wish to emphasize is that I do not seem able to engorge tea without it. Is this inevitable in the late forties?"

It certainly is not. This very distressing habit, which no woman should be expected to tolerate, has nothing to do with age—otherwise, as R.S. should have realized, the pavilion at Lord's during the tea interval (to take an example at random) would sound like a piggery. It is due to taking in tea either too hot or in too large quantities, or both. In

any case the root cause is greed as the very employment by my correspondent of the word "engorge" may have led the reader to suspect. But I am glad to have had the point raised, since it enables me to draw attention to a general rule of great importance, viz. that as the outward charms of youth fade more and not less attention must be paid to the inner graces. *Manners maketh middle-aged man!* Why, after all, should we behave at fifty in a way that no Nanny would have permitted for an instant at five?

I now turn to pyjamas, which seem to have touched many readers on the raw.

It is common ground among mediatricians that a classic symptom of middle age is the moment when the pyjama coat is no longer tucked religiously inside the trousers before retiring, and I confess that the uproar caused by so elementary a revelation (in my opening paper) has come as a surprise to me. "It has nothing to do with advancing years," one reader declares, "but is simply a matter of individual preference. I have found of late that it is more *comfortable* to wear the coat outside, and that is all there is to it." Another, though willing to admit that shellfish no longer suit him, angrily protests that he neither knows nor cares whether he wears his pyjama coat inside or out. "When I begin to bother my head about trifles of that kind I shall really be middle-aged," he concludes. And a gentleman from Worplesdon triumphantly claims that I have precisely reversed the true situation. "When I was younger I always wore the coat outside," he

says. "Now that I am on the verge of middle age, I naturally tuck it inside for greater warmth."

All this is of great interest to the specialist, for these letters and many more like them reveal with startling clarity the lengths of self-deception to which middle-aged men will go even in relatively minor matters. My correspondent who finds himself more *comfortable* is no doubt so far quite correct: where he errs is in his failure to admit that he was quite comfortable once before, in his tucked-in days, when his waist measurement was less.* Similarly, the angry reader who "neither knows nor cares" how he wears his pyjama coat may take it from me that he wears it outside—or did, until he read my paper. If he had worn it inside he would have known, and neither cared nor written.

The case of my Worplesdon reader would be amusing were it not for the possibility of a tragic dénouement in the near future.† I have no doubt that he wore the coat outside as he claims in his "younger days." What he overlooks is that I listed this particular mode, quite correctly, as a symptom

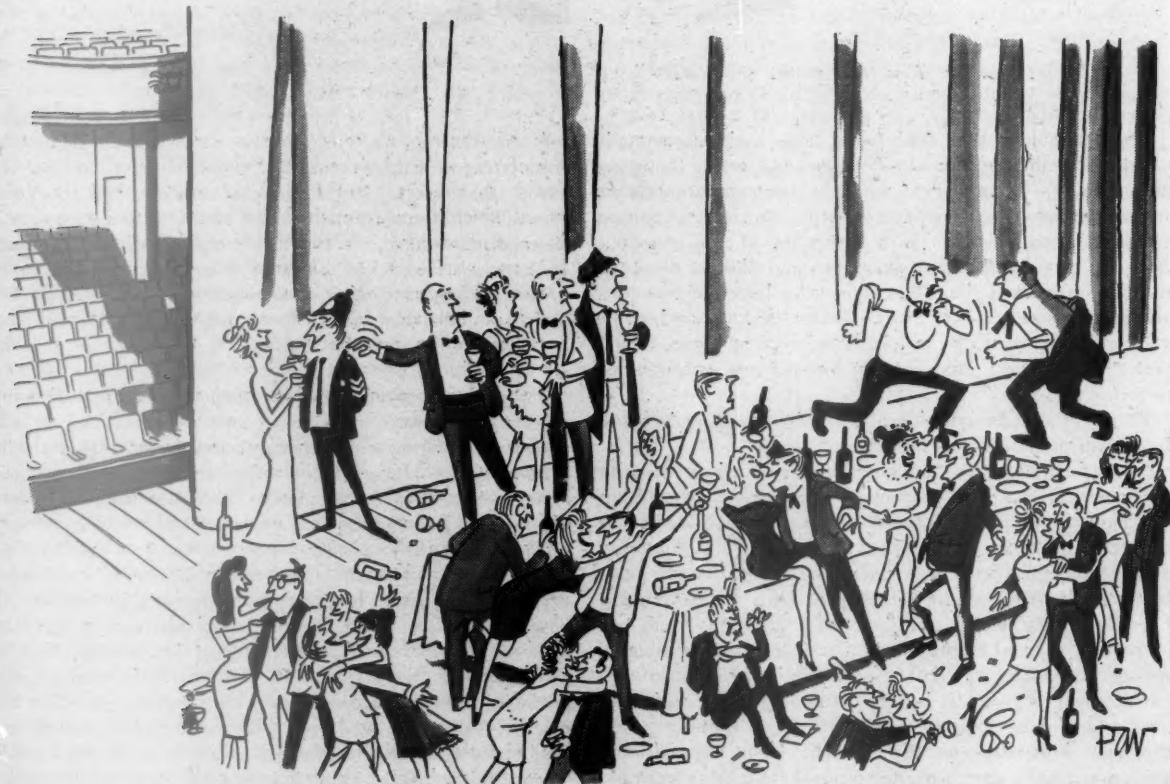
*It is almost certain that this correspondent's pyjama trousers are held up by non-adjustable elastic, or a very short cord. But note that, even with a long cord, there is a tendency to pull it tighter when the jacket has to be retained inside.

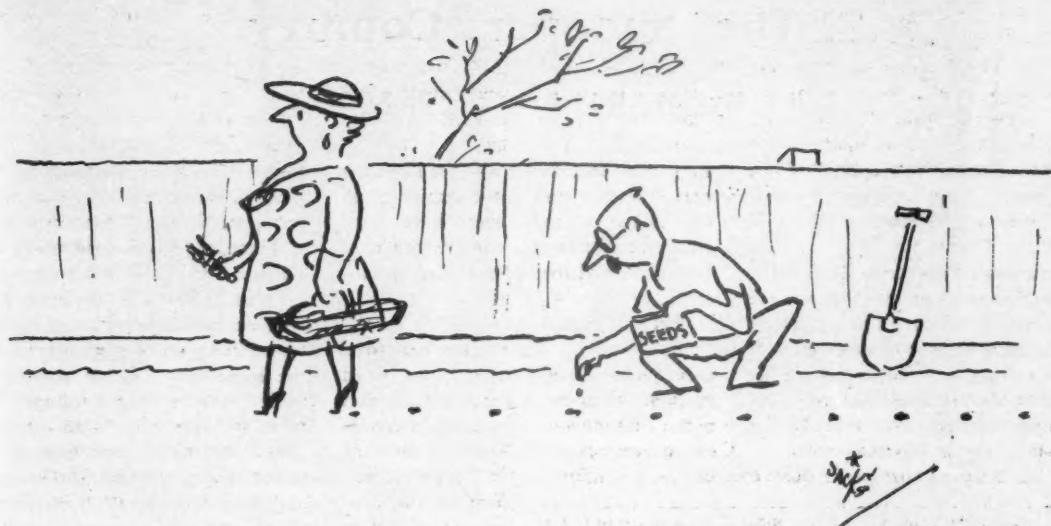
†What one fears here, on the evidence as known, is the onset of nightshirts without any proper psychological preparation.

of Early Middle Age I, the first or transitional period from youth to M.A. Now that he is, as I should guess, at least in L.M. I he confuses (as often happens) early middle age with youth and has no memories, as yet, of still earlier happenings and habits. That he has *reverted*—"on the verge of middle age," in his terribly revealing phrase—to tucking-in is neither surprising nor uncommon. A fear of draughts, real or imagined, is so characteristic of the Late Middle era that I ought perhaps to have included it in my list of symptoms.

Before leaving this vexed question of pyjamas I want to sound one note of warning. DON'T CHANGE NOW. Once a man begins to worry about details of this kind, perhaps tucking his coat in one night from false pride and pulling it out the next from distrust of his own motives, there is no end to it. Just get into bed as you are and try to sleep. The thing, after all, is only a symptom of something that has happened anyway, whether you choose to recognize it or not. Nor is it the only or even the most important symptom. One way to forget about it is to ask yourself whether you still *climb* into bed, or just sit on it and wait until the sagging of the back brings the legs up.

In my concluding paper next week I shall hope to dispose of one or two ill-natured canards about middle age started by readers whom I suspect of being either too young or too old to know very much about it.





The Subconscious Litigant

By RUPERT TOWNSHEND-ROSE

MOTIVATION analysts have shown that hidden persuasion can overcome the layman's dread of the law and lawyers. The techniques of depth psychology are opening up new markets to a profession which is debarred from conventional advertising.

Primitive forms of subliminal appeal have, of course, been in use for a long time. Conspicuous deed boxes bearing the names of titled clients—real or imaginary—assure the newly-arrived that they have chosen a top men's top man. Bogus big-business 'phone calls in the middle of an interview are too transparent a fiction to be practised much now.

To-day, psycho-persuaders are letting the hooks down much deeper in the search for client appeal. Valuable field research has been undertaken by Dr. van Tort and a team of workers from the Balham Institute of Applied Psychology. Analysing several thousand divorce actions, they have shown that every case involved a husband and wife, and that after divorce the matrimonial home would come on the market if the new wife could be dissuaded from living in it. The extra business had only to be gathered in, and it was Dr. van Tort himself who suggested the painting "A

New Home for the Bride," which an articed clerk can do in oils on a numbered chart. Hung in the waiting-room in place of the traditional Insurance Company calendar, the painting has produced extraordinary results. Double divorces are giving rise to four property transactions, and the sharing of this work among the solicitors to the parties is doing much to promote cordiality in the profession.

But this sort of thing is of limited effect, restricted as it is to existing clients. Dr. van Tort has shown that resistance to the law is greatest in the middle-income brackets, and it is there that the richest seams lie. His work established the unrealized fact that many people are subconsciously repelled by the father-figure of the family solicitor, with his frustrating "No!" People want to be told they are in the right. Once this positive approach is made the springs of power are released, and clients go all-out in the defence of rights they had not realized they possessed. The snob value of a House of Lords appeal is catching on, and the documentary film *You Too a Village Hampden* is likely to congest the courts to such an extent that the elevation of solicitors to the Bench will have seriously to be considered.

The importance of an eye-catching office has at last been realized, and the elementary bloomer of glamorous secretaries was quickly corrected. Women clients are not attracted, and ensure that their men-folk are not attracted either. More effective at bringing in the business is the smart young man who can use a dictation machine and two telephones at the same time. The advantage of having a law office over an estate agency has long been realized. How much greater the site value of premises adjoining the new betting shops! All kinds of business will flow from this propinquity—tax avoidance, company formation, and a fair sprinkling of bankruptcy and assignments for the benefit of creditors.

Nor is the psychological value of lesser gimmicks overlooked. Sales of "Make Your Own Will" kits, once despised, are now warmly encouraged. People who have savoured the joys of disinheriting their loved ones are soon impelled to make involved testamentary dispositions that call for the skill of the professional draftsman. Others bequeath the *damnosā hereditas* of a home-made will, and in this way many a fine estate is put to good use that would otherwise have been frittered away among the beneficiaries.

The Snooper Country

By MARJORY E. FYSON

"SAY *nagsha*." "Nashqa." "No, listen. *Naq-*." "*Naq*." "*sha*." "*sha*." "*Nagsha*." "*Nashqa*." Oh, well . . .

If there was a half-warmed fish in the good Dr. Spooner's breast, it must have been a desire to visit the Punjab, where he would have been in his element. It is not accidental sentences, but words, consonants, vowels, and all on purpose, that are spoonerized here. Punjabi is a distinct language, composed entirely of French Ns, Russian witches, very hard Ds, and spoonerisms on Urdu words. My father, who is biased, says it has a Greek future tense. It was he who always told me that Lucknow was really Naklao, but the British spoonerized it. I now strongly suspect that it was originally Lucknow, and the

Punjabis spoonerized it—just like their nerve, when it isn't in the Punjab at all. Of course it may even have been Naklao, the Punjabis spoonerized it to Lucknow, and then spoonerized it back again.

"What is Punjabi for mud?" "*Chiker*." Punjabi my foot. Anyone can hear what they have done to the Urdu word *keecher*. They call a *degchi a dejki*, and picture becomes pitchker, for of course the habit applies to English words as well. My favourite is "sniggle-urn." What? You know, evading the customs, snigglum gold across the border.

Sometimes you get a very subtle transposition of consonants. "I didn't see the Aircondition in church to-day." "But there is no air-conditioning in church—it's far too big." "No, the

Padre Sahib—the Aircondition." I see now; he means the Very Rev. who performs archidiaconal functions.

There are other word tricks in both Punjabi and Urdu which appeal to the peculiar tribes who invented English. The double-barrelled word is, I think, found in no other languages with quite the same silly lack of meaning. (In Malay it is simply a plural: "mata-mata"—"eyes, eyes"—in other words The Police.) But any English person will at once catch the ridiculous euphony of "jhuggra-wuggra" (quarrelling and all that), "subzi-wubzi" (vegetables, etc.), "rumble-tumble" (scrambled eggs), "khansi-wansi" (coughs and colds). I hope the Urdu or Punjabi speaker will as quickly catch on to the idea of roly-poly, teeny-weeny, namby-pamby and shilly-shally.

If the small word is repeated without change, it means something a bit different "ahiste ahiste"—slowly gradually; "wari-wari"—turn by turn. This is a word I have used from infancy, imagining it to be good Urdu, but when I came out with it here on my return after many years, I found it is pure Punjabi, the Urdu being "baribari." It is the same with "lumbardar" or head-man. I now find it is really "numberdar" in a sort of Anglo-Urdu. Well, I shall go on saying wari-wari and lumbardar to my dying day; which shows how much I have been infected by Punjabi notions.



"REVIVAL HOUR AT
ASSEMBLY OF GOD
Upper Belgravia Crescent
SUNDAY AT 7.30

Amazing statement in the Bible regarding the PRINCE OF DARKNESS and his relationship to MISSILES, SPACE TRAVEL and modern JET FIGHTERS. What of FLYING SAUCERS? Men will live in caves of the earth! Hear a message no one should miss . . . startling . . . revealing. Preacher:

RICHARD BAKER

Also . . . Ex-speedway champion and East London Winter Handicap motor-cyclist, will give his testimony. Hear him tell of his search for thrill which took him through every bed in the general ward of Johannesburg hospital.

The Sick will be PRAYED FOR."

Daily Dispatch, S.A.

High time, too.

THEN AS NOW

London cabmen have always been as resistant to change as they are now to the introduction of minicabs.



SMALL PROFITS, QUICK RETURNS.

LONDON CABBY. "WOT WITH THESE 'ERE MOTOR BUSES AN' TUBES AN' ALL, BLOWED IF I KNOW WOT THE KEB BUSINESS IS COMIN' TO!" FRENCH COCHER. "DO AS I'VE DONE, MON VIEUX. TRY CHEAP FARES AND TAXIMÈTRES."

March 21, 1906



"Anyone for tennis?"

The Habsburgs and I

By WILLI FRISCHAUER

FOR me it is sad to think of the plight of Dr. Otto von Habsburg who is "His Imperial Majesty" to Austrian monarchists. Wherever I travel in the world I see slogans asking people to go home—"Ike go home!" (in Japan) or "Khrushchev go home!" (in New York)—but here is a man who is barred from going home to Austria unless he agrees to refrain from all political activity (a condition which, incidentally, could be more usefully imposed on a lot of other people I can think of). For my part I doubt whether Dr. Otto, reputed to be the world's most erudite pretender, has a very vivid memory of the country which is closed to him although (or because) his illustrious family ruled over it for nearly a thousand years. I wonder whether he even remembers his father Karl, Austria's last Emperor, or his grand-uncle, Emperor Franz Josef with the photogenic mutton-chop whiskers. Yet I

feel very strongly for him. Because I remember . . .

The Habsburg family has played a large part in my early life. One of my uncles acted as solicitor (unpaid) to Frau Katherina Schratt who was the aged Emperor Franz Josef's *armante du cœur*, and delving into my early memories with Freudian persistence (for Freud lived in "our street" and frequently visited us for after-dinner coffee), I can vividly recall my awe when I heard that Uncle Emil had been playing "Tarrok," a popular Austro-Hungarian card game, with the Emperor and Frau Schratt the previous evening. How I basked in the reflected glory! Also my father often tried to impress the uninitiated (and succeeded) by letting them quite casually into the family secret that his other brother, Berthold, had been one of the "young liberals" (sort of *fin du siècle* Austrian Bevanites) whom Crown Prince Rudolf

had gathered around him. (On closer inquiry later on I came to the conclusion that it was they who had been gathering Rudolf in.)

Alas, my own contact with the Habsburgs was on a much lower though no less impressive level. I was still a very small boy when, one day, I was told that our cook had taken unto herself a husband by the very appropriate name of Koch, but had graciously consented to continue to work for us. Herr Koch was a balding, middle-aged, powerfully built man with enormous hands who delighted me by throwing me in the air and catching me safely in his firm grip. His job remained a mystery to me for some time (I assumed that his wife was keeping him since my mother complained of the high wage Frau Koch demanded). One day I found out that Herr Koch was Emperor Franz Josef's masseur. For the past twenty years, it appeared, he had

attended on the Emperor every morning at 4 a.m., pummelled the old gentleman's body mercilessly for half an hour, tweaked his neck, twisted his arms and stretched his legs. Imagine! It came as no surprise to me when I learned that, in spite of this close association between Emperor and masseur, they had never—never once in twenty years—exchanged a single word. That any ordinary human being should actually speak with the venerable old ruler whose outsize photograph adorned one of our tapestried (and otherwise tasteful) walls seemed inconceivable to me. Herr Koch, in fact, had strict instructions not to greet Franz Josef on arrival, not to speak while performing his duties and to take his leave in complete silence.

My admiration for Herr Koch was unbounded but also tinged with a dash of opportunism. For several months, before the great occasion of Franz Josef's birthday, which was celebrated by Trooping the Colour in the courtyard of the Vienna Hofburg, the prospect that it might be arranged for me to see

the ceremony was dangled before me as the only means of making me behave with tolerable courtesy to my elders, eat my spinach, go to bed without howling my head off and put on my too-tight new shiny black patent-leather sandals. Herr Koch, I was told, might be persuaded to take me to the Imperial servants' quarters and let me watch the Emperor from his fourth-floor room in the Hofburg overlooking the courtyard.

As a boy, I was not easily fooled. I continued to be atrociously rude, did not eat my spinach and screamed the house down when it was suggested that it was time for me to go to bed. I knew that the matter had been settled and that Herr Koch would take me anyway. My only concession was to wear the sandals without protest because they were my only footwear fit for the occasion. The months passed slowly but at last the great day came. At the crack of dawn I was in my place, a goldilocked, excited little horror of a boy surrounded by the children of Imperial coachmen, ageing pantry girls and some venerable figures who enjoyed the privilege of waiting at the Emperor's table on festive occasions.

Excitement mounted, the courtyard was crowded with impressive figures in multi-coloured uniforms and cock-feathered helmets, the trumpets issued their thunderous salute, the gallant

knights moved hither and thither. Their eyes were firmly fixed on the scene below, the people around me were solemnly silent, and "Hush, Hush" was the only answer I could elicit in response to my questions. In the event it appeared that all the time my gaze had been following the wrong man and, when the whole hullabaloo was over, Herr Koch was tactless enough to tell me so. That is how I did not see the Emperor. It was the end of my friendship with Herr Koch.

But my family continued to profit from the association with Herr Koch even after the death of Franz Josef and the collapse of the monarchy. By that time my brother was an aspiring young lawyer and Herr Koch asked him to represent his claim for a pension against the new Austrian Republic. My brother went to court—legal not imperial—and succeeded. As a result the other ex-Imperial servants entrusted him with their cases which he also won. His fees, I gathered, were substantial. He bought me my first school tie, which I proudly wore on the day when teacher told me it was about time I learned the new National Anthem; what did I mean by singing "*Gott erhalte, Gott beschütze—Unser Kaiser unser Land!*"?

"Are your people monarchists, or something?" she asked.



"According to this chap Ryle, the stars and galaxies are so far away that light takes an enormous time to reach us here sitting on this fence. Stars we're looking at now actually left the more distant galaxies thousands of millions of years ago. We aren't seeing them as they are now but, Jennifer, as they were then. What is more, stars that are farthest away in space are farthest away in time. Now, if the 'Big Bang' theory is right . . ."

Think About It Again Tomorrow

By A. H. BARTON

JUST before midnight Cranmer entered a double-berth sleeping car compartment at Euston Station. His intention was to spend the next day at a boarding school persuading the authorities to allow his son to give up Latin and devote more time to the Fine Arts. He foresaw difficulty over this and was glad to find himself very sleepy indeed, for a good night's sleep beforehand might be a help. In the lower berth a man was reading *Stalkey & Co.* through spectacles with a thick black upper bar. Cranmer prepared himself for bed. As he started to climb the ladder to the upper berth, his

travelling companion closed his book and spoke. "I have a theory," he said.

Cranmer finished his climb to the upper berth before he replied. "A theory?" he said. An enormous yawn overcame him but he kept it politely silent. "At midnight on Euston Station?"

"It has been bubbling about inside me for two lonely days in London and I can no longer contain it, even if I fall asleep in mid-exposition."

"Explain," Cranmer said. He put his head over the edge of his bunk and stared, upside down, at his companion. "Would you like me to take notes?"



"One or two of you may have doubts as to my régime's ability to withstand a Castro-type rebellion."

"No thank you, but I will of course wait until you are composed to listen."

Crammer withdrew his head, tucked in the spare maroon blanket, and settled his head against the pillows. "I am composed," he said. The door opened and a man took their tickets, accepted orders for morning tea and newspapers, and left. "I am again composed," Crammer said, fixing his gaze upon the aluminium bulkhead, "but I must confess that I also may fall asleep."

The voice from below began to expound: "It seems to me," it said, as the train began to move northwards out of London, "that the teaching of Latin and Greek may have been what has given the British the Royal Academy. Nineteenth century predecessors of mine, such as Mr. King of *Westward Ho!*, taught public schoolboys Latin

and Greek and were pleased if 'a little of it (stuck) among the barbarians.'

Crammer, whose eyes were beginning to close, opened them suddenly; he kept his silence but listened more closely.

"The young men thus educated joined the Indian Army or Civil Service and performed military and pro-consular duties with courage, restraint and patience. In the pockets of the more splendid of these young men were slim well-thumbed volumes of the *Odes of Horace*. They would comfort themselves with the contents of this book while standing-to at dawn behind dead camels; or in the intervals of issuing rice and goats' milk to famine-stricken Indian families. When you consider that every copy of this book, if accidentally dropped, would open at the ode about *Regulus*, you will agree that it

was a suitable book for these men to carry about.

"Latin was culture, manly culture and therefore proper. Knowledge of it ultimately became the sign that the hero in a story by, among others, Rudyard Kipling was not only inordinately fit, his eyes as clear as they were far apart, but also that he was a man of sensibility and higher thoughts. 'I am not a religious man,' such a hero might remark, 'but when I saw Lavery (or, it might be, Carshalton) turn up safe and sound, and right as a trivet, after three days lost on that mountain (in that steaming jungle), I am not ashamed to tell you, General, that I fell to my knees and prayed (that a tear ran down my cheek and I offered up a short prayer of thanksgiving).' They were ashamed of praying, or at least, if not ashamed—"

Cranmer spoke from the top bunk, almost alertly: "My recollection is that you mentioned the Royal Academy earlier on. My terror is that I should fall asleep before you get back to it."

"I hope to get there very shortly. Not only were they ashamed of prayer, or at least felt that prayer should be mentioned apologetically, they were also ashamed of art. They were apologetic about their religion but they knew to their vast advantage what it was. But, with art, they were ashamed of something no one had ever explained to them. I think that in their inmost minds they associated the creative instinct with sex—"

"Steady on down there," said Cranmer. "This is British Railways we are with."

"For them a picture was a good picture if the painter seemed to them to know what he was painting about. If a martingale was depicted with accuracy on a horse's chest, they felt that the painter was a decent fellow who, if not actually a horse himself, had at least like themselves ridden horses. That a painting might have merit as such they did not know; no one had told them; and when, now and again, someone did try to tell them, they were suspicious: unhealthy moonshine, they would inform themselves dispassionately, and they would begin to ask themselves what the man would be like in a tight corner. Hence the Royal Academy."

"I am thankful that we have reached the Academy at last, but haven't we reached it rather abruptly?"

"My theory is this, and as it is the

theory of a teacher of Latin and Greek you will understand how tentative it is. The time at school when these young men might have learnt about art was employed in teaching them the classics. All their inborn interest in creativeness was channelled into the superb but narrow conduit of the Ancient World."

"Much as I am cheered to hear you propound this view," said Cranmer, "I do not think it fair to condemn the whole of the Royal Academy. If you will look back to wet Junes past you will remember that *The Times* publishes annually the percentage of pictures, as opposed to colour-photography-the-hard-way, in the Summer Exhibition; this percentage, although not yet large, is growing."

"I think it likely you are right. I am perhaps myself a symptom. I am the senior classics master of a fine school and yet, as you see, I am ready—"

"Of what school? Of Loamstown?"

"Yes."

"You comfort me." Momentarily wide awake, and proud to be starting the day's work so early, the words began to tumble from Cranmer's mouth. "I intended to search you out later to-day, and ask you if my son might give up his Latin and spend more time on Art. He seems overloaded at the moment, as though he had one too many subjects. I was afraid I had a great battle before me."

There was a sound of creaking and the face of Cranmer's companion appeared from below, his knuckles on the upper bunk rail. "You think

that a boy might be right to give up Latin for Art?"

"Yes," said Cranmer.

His companion sank back into his bunk. "You think this theory of mine is *right!*" His voice was drowsy now, and mildly dispirited.

"I like it," said Cranmer, himself suddenly very sleepy again.

When his companion next spoke, it was almost in his sleep. "You think that such a boy in later life would be all right in a tight corner? Are you—" his voice was now small and far away. "Are you all right in a tight corner?"

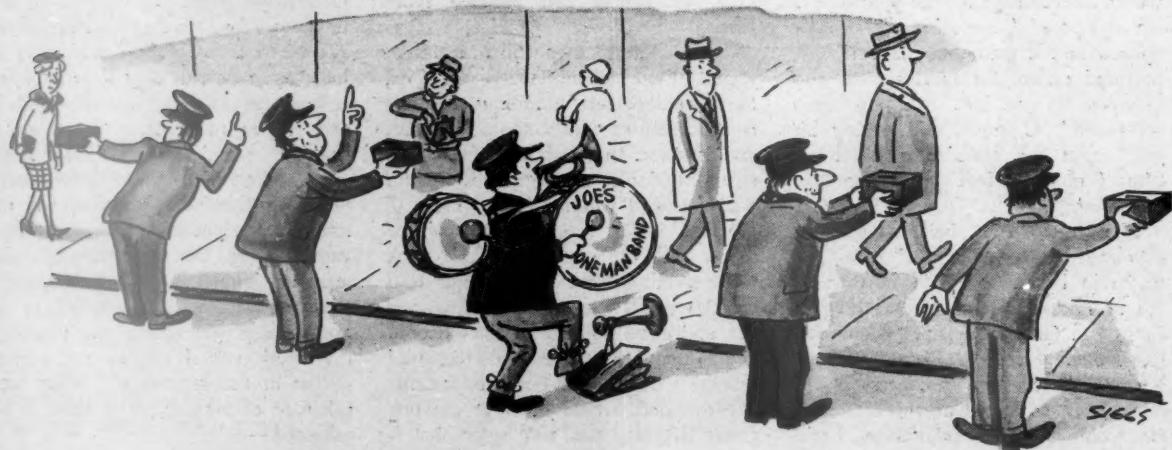
Against waves of drowsiness Cranmer fought to get an answer out. He failed, and fell asleep. There was a small thud as *Stalkey & Co.* slipped from the lower bunk to the floor, dislodged by the vibration of the train.

BUDGET MEMOS No. 4

Attention Mr. Selwyn Lloyd

Beg to call to your urgent notice immense potential revenue from tax on public speeches. Suggested scale, five minutes tax free, a shilling a minute thereafter. Well known that speeches are given for speaker's own satisfaction and amusement, and legislation would at one blow swell national income and check a widespread social evil. Speeches in the Palace of Westminster untaxed, as spectacle of M.P.s bankrupted after all-night sessions not desirable.

Hon. Secretary,
League Against Unilateral
Conversation.



Essence of Parliament

A N all-night week for a change. Did Sir Gordon Touche stand up to collect the voices or didn't he? If he did there was a division and if he didn't there wasn't. Mr. George Brown, it is true, was raring to make history along with James I and Cobbett and Mr. Asquith and all the other boys but in reality the only issue was whether Sir Gordon had stood up or not. The Socialists said that he didn't stand, and Mr. Green of Preston was put up from the Conservative back benches to say that he did. The Socialists, with Mr. Paget at their head, gave Mr. Green a pretty complete lie direct. Mr. Green looks one of the most agreeable of men, and I had great sympathy with him. For it is not a pleasant experience for a newish and youngish Member to be publicly called a liar by one half of the House. But his grievance to my mind was not only against the Socialists. Mr. Green, standing at the bar of the House, saw, as he alleged, Sir Gordon Touche rise from his seat. Now standing at the bar of the House he was standing by the side of the Sergeant-at-Arms. It is the Sergeant-at-Arms who puts in motion the whole machinery of a division, and the signal to him to do so is when he sees the Chair rise. There is no means of mechanical communication between the Chair and the Sergeant-at-Arms. Therefore since the Sergeant-at-Arms put the machinery in motion on this occasion, it is to be presumed that he saw the Chair rise, and therefore to be presumed that Mr. Green, standing by his side, also saw the Chair rise. Now it seems that Mr. Green as a newish Member was not aware of this lack of mechanical communication between the Chair and the Sergeant-at-Arms. So he sat in his place, comparatively bloody and comparatively unbowed, leaving the heathen to rage so furiously at him and making little attempt to answer them. Surely it would have been only fair that the Conservative leaders, when asking him to speak for them, should have coached him on this point so that he could have brought out the crowning proof of his own veracity. Instead Mr. Green was left to do the best that he could, and

Mr. Butler reserved for himself the opportunity of explaining the workings of the machinery of the division. This

was surely a bit rough. It was a pity that the Socialists carried the Affaire Touche to the division lobby. There is always a row whenever a Chairman accepts a closure and there was no great reason why they should not make a row about it if they wanted. But dividing against the Chair is another matter. Perhaps it is so rare an event for the Socialists to be united on anything that it is ungracious to complain of their being united against Sir Gordon, but it is a pity if they can find nothing better on which to unite, for these are the tactics which will soon reduce a bore into a bear garden.

The revenge that they saw fit to take was to stage a filibuster on fish and keep the House up till 5 a.m. It was all, said

Mr. Callaghan, to teach the Patronage Secretary a lesson. Mr. Harold Lever, who has done this sort of thing before, made a speech of two and a half hours. Now if there be one golden rule of politics more certain than another it is this: IF YOU ARE GOING TO SPEAK FOR MORE THAN TWO HOURS MAKE QUITE CERTAIN BEFORE YOU START THAT YOUR BRACES ARE WORKING PROPERLY. It was manifest fairly early on that Mr. Lever's were in difficulties, and such Members as drifted into the Chamber were confessedly more interested to see whether his trousers were going to stay the course than they were to learn his opinions on fish. At one point gallant Sir Vere Harvey proposed a short adjournment of the House so that he might hitch them up again, but Mr. Lever, muttering doubtless beneath his breath *Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus isti*, refused with a "for this relief no thanks" and ploughed gallantly on to the end, one trouser up and the other what might fairly be described as so-so.

Aunts over Rhodesia

On Tuesday Mr. Gresham Cooke was reasonably anxious to know why two of his constituents might not inherit money because their aunt (as he alleged) had died out of wedlock. Interesting as this curious point may have been, it was not what Members had come to hear. They had come to hear a statement from Mr. Macleod on Rhodesia and that was not forthcoming. Frustrated Members had therefore to derive the day's amusement from the antics of Standing Committees upstairs. The Criminal Justices decided by an overwhelming majority that they had no mind to be birched and the Licensers heard Mr. Glenvil Hall propound the curious doctrine that it was a "barbarous" thing to drink standing up. To one who has in his time drunk standing up and who has in his time drunk sitting down and sometimes indeed betwixt and between and who loves Mr. Glenvil Hall this side idolatry, this was a curious test of civility.

After a quiet day on Tuesday it was back to the all-night. Indeed for a long time there were two late sittings going at the same time—National Health on the floor of the House and the Post Office upstairs in committee, and members flitted from one to the other, uncertain under which Chairman it was their primary duty to sleep. A bevy of women M.P.s with Mrs. Barbara Castle at their head was gallantly washing up cups and serving behind the counter in the tea-room, but alas, there came a time when there was no more to serve. Just as the Post Office committee was packing up, the tea-room ran out of victuals.

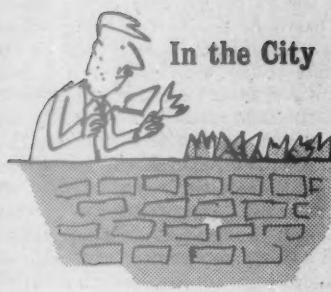
Now the Government have a trick to bring Socialist unity to a rapid end. For them defence is the best method of offence. All that they have to do is to put on a defence debate and the Socialists will be at it like cats and dogs, and this is to happen in a few days' time.

Mr. Silverman's vote of censure on the Speaker on Thursday was of a very different type from Monday's vote on Sir Gordon. Mr. Silverman was at great pains to explain that there was no personal animus about it and that the motion was only put down in that form because the rules of order so required it. He accepted that the House could not debate the reprieve of a man condemned to death. He wanted to elucidate whether it could debate whether such a man had been wrongly condemned. As for whether there should have been a further inquiry on the Riley case we cannot say as Mr. Silverman and other champions have not revealed their sources of new evidence. It was not a party matter and Mr. Mitchison from the Front Opposition bench opposed Mr. Silverman, but sixty supported him in the lobby.

— PERCY SOMERSET



SIR GORDON TOUCHE



Cash in Cold Cures

A FEW weeks ago we dwelt on the profits that were being made by tranquilizing this affluent society and catering for its ills—real and imaginary. The time has come to be more specific. In recent weeks the country has been sneezing its head off and chemists' shops have been dispensing vast quantities of cold cures. This is a seasonal trade but from all accounts the winter peak this year has surpassed anything previously experienced. The menacingly named "Asian Flu" has provided all the selling stimulus that was required—it might almost have been invented by the manufacturers and distributors of antidotes.

One of the most popular of the cold cures is "Coldrex," made by a private company, Phillips, Scott & Turner. There is, alas, no Stock Exchange interest; but if ever this firm is taken over by one of the public companies, the shares of the absorber will contain a very dynamic element. Here is a case for watching and pouncing if and when the time comes.

The public companies which have profited from the recent boom in cold cures include the Beechams Group. The original pill "Worth a guinea a box," was reputed to cure every ill, including the common cold. The group has improved on that basic product, as indeed it should, given the large sums spent on research. The shares yield little more than 3 per cent but the recent record of growth is impressive and promises to continue.

Glaxo, through their subsidiary Allen and Hanburys, are also well entrenched on the cold front. The shares suffer the handicap of being too well thought of. On the present price they yield only 2½ per cent, but this is on a dividend covered nearly four times by earnings. The richness of this cover indicates the extent to which the company is ploughing back profits. This it must do if it is to maintain the heavy expenditure on

continuous research which is required to keep up with the leaders in this field.

Among these leaders let mention also be made of British Drug Houses, whose shares were complimented as an investment when pharmaceutical equities were last surveyed in Lombard Lane. These shares have stood up very well against the recent somewhat reactionary trend of equities as a whole.

A large proportion of the cold cures sold to the British public are retailed by Boots Cash Chemists and Timothy Whites. Quite apart from the recent seasonal peak in these particular sales, the trade which is being done by these two firms is expanding steadily. Their shares deserve inclusion in any portfolio of growth stocks. Their merits are too well recognized, for the yields the shares offer are merely 2 per cent and 3½ per cent respectively.

Finally there is the Distillers Company. In its large and growing "industrial" empire, there is a biochemical

group. Its wholly owned subsidiary Distillers Co. (Biochemicals) Ltd. has for some time been hot on the trail of cold cures. It has been doing good business in the recent counter-attack against Asian Flu.

The Distillers Company, apart from its biochemical group, has what many people consider the best of all vested interests in the yearly assaults of the cold virus. Thousands will vouch that the surest protection lies in the wise intake of the company's principal product—Scotch. And if despite this protection the virus none the less gains a temporary victory, what better fate for the vanquished than to be condemned to a warm bed with the hot toddy providing the necessary central heating, *cum* prophylactic? Distillers shares at their present price yield nearly 4 per cent. In view of all their attractions, potable and industrial, they are well worth their price.

— LOMBARD LANE

In the Country



Hedge Notes

EXPECTING too much of a hedge (as of life) is one sure road to sad disillusion. Of the many qualities demanded of a hedge, several are likely to be contradictory. A hedge that will grow fast and provide a screen speedily isn't likely to stay tidy and neat without much work. A hedge that is beautiful and fragrant (honeysuckle, rosemary, lavender) and forms a good garden includer or container may be nearly useless as an excluder of even the mildest assailants—let alone bullocks, boys and dogs. Contrive the best of barriers, and it may be seen as a challenge: everyone has read how John Evelyn's loved holly hedge was ruined when Peter the Great set his courtiers trundling one another downhill in wheelbarrows and into the holly.

Some species (perhaps much admired on holiday in mild Bournemouth or Torquay) win a false reputation as good

hedgers: "macrocarpa," so easily damaged by severe frost, is an example: a hard winter will usually recall the provenance—Southern California. For a soft-texture clipped hedge, Lawson's cypress or a thuya is far better, but the future in this bracket may well lie with Leyland's cypress, a hybrid of uncertain parentage still under test at Kew. Yew is not quite so slow-growing as many people think but it constitutes a serious poison hazard for ponies and farm stock.

A hedge census would reveal some grim figures of privet, laurel, *Lonicera nitida* and some others. For a change, I once heard an expert recommend *Poncirus trifoliata* (a hardy miniature orange with fragrant flowers and fierce spines) to make a dog-proof hedge but that was in the soft south-west.

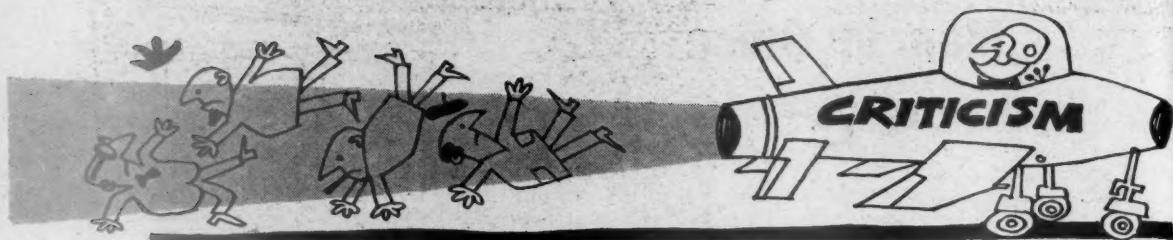
There are coloured foliage possibilities galore. You can have grey, gold or purple hedges. For the last *Berberis thunbergii* var. *atropurpurea* is good (and exclusive) but the books list a wide choice. *Chaenomeles* ("Japonica") might with advantage be more widely used for hedging and so might various roses. In America, where garden hedges are often considered standoffish and unneighbourly, and privacy is at a discount, rose hedges are being increasingly planted for quite another reason—as car-catcher crash barriers on speed highways. They cost less than a dollar a foot and maintain themselves.

— J. D. U. WARD

Man in Office

by *Larry*





AT THE PLAY

Henry IV, Part I (OLD VIC)

John Gabriel Borkman (MERMAID)

IN *Henry IV, Part I* it is Falstaff who leavens the lump of the double-crossing Lancastrian nobles; Hotspur and Prince Hal help, but it is mainly Falstaff. Unless he is played by an actor with a true sense of his rich absurdity the play falters, in spite of its splendid passages. Douglas Campbell is an admirable actor with a fine voice and a strong personality, but alas! in the new production at the Old Vic he is not Falstaff. His looks are with him, but his humours appear to be switched on, and he hasn't the innate enjoyment of his own futility that can lift the part to

greatness. In short, he is only superficially funny, and that is not enough.

This weakness throws too heavy a load on Prince Hal and Hotspur, who are not outstanding. John Stride's Prince is the better; he has an undergraduate zest for low company and yet a touch of royalty that makes him seem conscious of his destiny. This is nearly a good performance. Tony Britton, acting against his natural grain, forces a note of heavy impetuosity as Hotspur that becomes monotonous.

Robert Harris is a very well-spoken King and the coroneted crooks of England are sonorously dignified. Dennis Vance's production fills in the background of the play firmly, with excellent fighting and imaginative sets by Timothy O'Brien that come down from the flies to suggest the gnarled timbers of medieval

REP SELECTION

Queen's, Hornchurch, *The Shifting Heart*, until March 4.

Playhouse, Nottingham, *Celebration*, until March 4.

Belgrave, Coventry, *A Taste of Honey*, until February 25.

Leatherhead Theatre, *Mr. Ghillie*, until February 25.

barns and leaves plenty of sky and space. I liked them much better than his dresses, in which a horribly glutinous plastic material plays an entirely unworthy part.

The Mermaid's open stage has been adapted more successfully than might have been expected to the special needs of *John Gabriel Borkman*, where people live caged in the tomb of their own rooms; Michael Stringer has set Borkman's above and behind the other, and the famous sound of his feet pacing up and down comes through chillingly. One is still conscious, however, of a great deal of dead space all round, which is only used when Borkman goes out into the night; this is an awkwardness an open stage cannot overcome.

Since Peter Ashmore's production of *Hedda Gabler* with Peggy Ashcroft we have realized how well Ibsen responds to a light touch. Here Julius Gellner sets a funeral pace and imposes a uniform solemnity on the actors, so that even the minor scenes are too tense. This earnestness infects their voices, and in particular Bernard Miles's, whose very slow delivery seems to reflect a slight stroke in addition to the other calamities Borkman has suffered. Mr. Miles ably suggests the frustrations of a broken power maniac, but his performance has so little light and shade that it shares the monotony into which the leading characters are allowed to fall. Freda Jackson as Mrs. Borkman is unrelievedly grim and Josephine Wilson as Gunhild is unrelievedly a good woman; so far as they go they are effective, but they could have been much more interesting.



Sir John Falstaff—DOUGLAS CAMPBELL

(*Henry IV, Pt. I*)

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews.)

Ross (Haymarket—18/5/60), Rattigan's fine play about T. E. Lawrence, *A Man for All Seasons* (Globe—13/7/60), Robert Bolt's portrait of Sir Thomas More, *Fings Ain't Wot They Used T'Be* (Garrick—17/2/60), the brighter kind of British musical.

—ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

*No Love for Johnnie**Offbeat*

A BRIEF summing-up of *No Love for Johnnie* (Director: Ralph Thomas) would be that it is a popularized, simplified, slick, superficial treatment of a theme that might make a first-rate film if treated with more subtlety and given more depth of character. It is well and efficiently done and it will no doubt be a commercial success: it's perfectly good entertainment; but it might have been much more.

This is the one about the careerist M.P. The film opens just after the general election, when Johnnie Byrne (Peter Finch) is hoping for office in the new government and is disappointed. He had strong reason to hope, apparently, for it's established that the first thought of the average person in the street of his constituency is that he will be in the Cabinet, and goodness knows an average constituent's first thought after the election of an average M.P. is usually rather more selfish than that.

But the part as written does not give Mr. Finch a real chance to make Johnnie a convincing figure. It is hard to believe that this man is driven by overwhelming political ambition, because we get almost no sign of his being interested in politics. The difficulty is, of course, that any such interest would have to be shown with definite examples; and definite examples would in themselves engage or repel the filmgoer's sympathies, diverting attention from the real story.

The real story is of the conflict in Johnnie's character between love (to put it kindly) and ambition. His wife leaves him; he meets a much younger girl and has a passionate affair with her, which keeps him away from the House at a time when he is supposed to fire the first shot in a campaign against the party's leaders. This he had promised to do, it's understood, with the idea of bettering his own political chances, assuming he could now hope for no official promotion. But then the girl, realizing that the difference in their ages would make permanent happiness impossible, sensibly retreats before getting too much involved. Soon afterwards his wife offers to return—just before he is told that the reason for his not having been given government office was that she was known to have Communist connections, and that now she has left there is a post for him. Fade-out



Johnnie Byrne, M.P.—PETER FINCH

[No Love for Johnnie
A Shade

on his automatic choice of that rather than his wife; no love for Johnnie.

The basic trouble is that the love is far more convincing than the ambition; on the evidence of Johnnie's character as shown here, love would win. Mr. Finch does all he can, but that is how the part is written. The other characters, too, are quite superficially presented: we can feel that we are meant to recognize and describe any one as "the sort of person who—", though each has the physical attributes of some skilful player. Similarly a great many of the scenes are "typical": here we have one of those parties, and here one of those dull Parliamentary debates—the average moviegoer who has never been present at either is sure they are really like this and is pleased to see pictorial evidence, a little hoked up for added amusement and with interesting documentary details. Yes, the whole thing is good entertainment, and it's well done; the disappointment is that there wasn't something more to do.

The second British Lion film "designed to raise the standard of the second feature" is *Offbeat* (Director: Cliff Owen). It hasn't the authority of the first, *Suspect*, but even so it's a remarkably effective little crime-and-suspense story, and more worthy of top billing than many so-called first features. Of course there are weaknesses. The lighting is sometimes too bright and glossy; some of the dialogue gives the brisk back-and-forth effect of over-rehearsal, and parts of it are too obviously explanation to the audience rather than the natural talk of characters in the film. But it has qualities that outweigh all this. The story is simple: a Scotland Yard man

(William Sylvester) joins a gang of professional thieves, takes part in their highly organized jewel robbery, and at last, though he has not betrayed them, is thought by both sides to have done so. Some of the suspense (breaking the beam of the photo-electric cell, waiting for the arrival of the man who will recognize him) is excellently handled, and there is even time for a little philosophizing about motives (one man likes the danger, but the boss says "With me it's just the planning"). The characters are obvious enough, but many small-part people have good moments—Victor Brooks in particular is memorably amusing as a police-inspector trying to suffer toffees gladly. Bearing in mind its aim, I approve of this one . . . even though I dislike the principle of the double-feature programme. An unusually sensible advertisement points out that you don't have to see its companion picture.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

In London: *Shadows* (27/7/60 and 26/10/60), *L'Avventura* (7/12/60) and *La Dolce Vita* (21/12/60) are still at the top of the list. Others worth while include *Les Tricheurs* (18/1/61), Becker's last film *The Hole* (1/2/61), *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (9/11/60), *The Mark* (8/2/61), and—on a different level—*Never on Sunday* (30/11/60) and *The Sundowners* (25/1/61).

Offbeat (see above—72 mins.) is already released. *The Singer Not the Song* (18/1/61—132 mins.) is beautiful visually, but otherwise unsatisfactory.

—RICHARD MALLETT



"We can't go on meeting like this—my husband is getting suspicious."

AT THE GALLERY

Toulouse-Lautrec at the Tate

IT looks as if the Tate Gallery will score another "full house" with their Toulouse-Lautrec Exhibition. If so, the success will be well deserved. The pictures come largely from the Toulouse-Lautrec Museum at Albi (that splendid building by the cathedral, overlooking the river). A number of early works show what a wonderfully gifted boy Lautrec was: note the deft and vigorous drawing of the hind legs of the horse in Number 1, painted at the age of fifteen in 1879. But he went on from strength to strength during most of his tragically short life, and this exhibition gives us one of his large, fully worked out compositions, Number 51, "The Salon in the Rue des Moulins," painted in 1894—I believe nearly all his other large, highly worked-out pictures are in the U.S.A. This picture strikes a perfect balance between illustration and decoration: the silhouettes of the women's figures, with their different sorts of *déshabillé*, combine with the lines of the plum-coloured banquets and the bogus oriental décor in the background to make a most satisfactory pattern; at the same time one feels that Lautrec has caught the strange atmosphere of the place portrayed and, in addition, that each personage is most wittily or sympathetically observed. The expression on the face of the most draped woman (second from the right) is as unforgettable as a character in a novel by Tolstoy. Another canvas of 1894, evidently before his decline started, is the portrait of his relation, Dr. Tapie de Cleyran, with its fine contrast of

clear-cut shapes, namely those made by the model's clothes against the sweeping brush-strokes used for the floor and the figures in the background. In addition there are among the eighty-nine items others in a lighter, gayer vein: schemes for posters and so on fairly bubbling with fun and wit. Exhibition closes March 15.

—ADRIAN DAINTRY

ON THE AIR

Rich Fare, Lots of It

THERE is a Damon Runyon story about a great eating contest (at Lindy's, I suppose) between a champion male glutton and a cavernous female challenger. At the end of the hideous but hilarious rites the female confesses to a certain malaise and tells the astonished spectators that her lack of form is puzzling. She was quite all right, she says, at the dress rehearsal during the afternoon.

I'm not sure that I've got the details right, but I recall the essence of the yarn whenever I am confronted on TV by scenes of families at their meals, and this seems to happen nowadays with twice-nightly frequency. It is a pretty old-fashioned play or serial that doesn't give the viewer a look at the kitchen sink and a chair at the kitchen table for a share of the bangers and mash. In *Dixon of Dock Green* the clatter of cutlery is continuous: in the Saturday and Sunday night plays, on both major channels, it is a poor sound-track that is without its quota of lip-smacking and post-prandial eructation.

The change in screened eating is very remarkable. A few years ago meals were

carefully avoided or at best were mere *pro forma* displays of dummy joints and chops: now, it appears, the canteen staff is forever on duty, real steam rises from the spuds, the sauce bottle is always on the go, and every actor worth his salt has to perfect the disagreeable knack of speaking coherently with his mouth full. Partly, no doubt, this move towards gastronomic realism is inspired by TV's preoccupation with "actuality" material and deep distrust of anything romantic, lyrical or idealist. Partly, again, it is inspired or conditioned by the fleshy commercial realism of the TV advertisements. A viewing public trained on a diet of gustatory jaws, maws and jingles cannot—so the producers' argument runs—be fobbed off in TV fiction with make-believe meals, *papier maché* sandwiches and rubber buns. All I know is that I find these studio banquets extremely distracting. While I ponder the mechanics of the canteen service and become anxious about the quality of the fare, the actors' appetites, and so on, I find that I am missing out on the storyline and the mumbled conversation. I also remember Runyon and wonder about the rehearsals.

Incidentally, would it be possible, in the inevitable pub scenes, to have the barman draw a pint that looks like a statutory pint—the glass full, the beer headed? If we must have realism near-beer is not good enough, and nothing offends the viewer's sense of order more violently than the fellow who orders his drink, takes one shuddering sip and leaves his purchase virtually untouched. Producers, I reckon, ought to be forcibly fed on all studio left-overs.

Two series of more than ordinary interest have just left the launching pad, and both should soon be successfully in orbit. The first, *Gallery* (BBC), is a political round-up consisting in the main of cross-talks and interviews. David Butler, the unblinking psephologist, provided the programme with its *raison d'être* when he compared British and American reporting of the political scene greatly to the disadvantage of the former. Though *Gallery* has little edge over steam editions of similar political fare it has obviously been produced with care and skill, and one can only hope that it succeeds in winning viewers in the younger brackets.

People with my long-viewing record will probably find *Winston Churchill, The Valiant Years* (by BBC out of ABC of America) rather old hat. After all these years, and all those films and documentaries, the sirens and the bombs and the "Sieg Heils" do not curdle the blood quite so readily. But TV has a new generation of viewers and for it these half-hours in the fearful 'forties with Richard Rodgers and the great Churchill should be compelling enough. I shall certainly have another basinful of the mixture as before.

— BERNARD HOLLOWOOD —

BOOKING OFFICE

SCIENCE-FICTION AS ONE OF THE FINE ARTS

By B. A. YOUNG

New Maps of Hell. Kingsley Amis. *Gollancz*, 16/-

Slave Ship. Frederik Pohl. *Dobson*, 11/6

The Mystery of Arthur Gordon Pym. Edgar Allan Poe and Jules Verne. *Arco Publications*, 12/6

MR. AMIS has been taking a narrow look at science-fiction: a bit too narrow for me, as his exclusion of fantasy and "space-opera" from the strict canon have deprived me of his comments on what seem to me some of the best stories in the genre, for example, Ray Bradbury's *The Fire Balloons*. Still, before we start complaining it would be more gracious to say how welcome is such a readable and perceptive treatise by a writer who is a student of literature on the one hand and a SF-addict on the other.

Mr. Amis has wasted little time on such classics as Verne and Wells; modern SF has grown into an art-form of its own, and this he has dissected with gusto and with skill. He is not concerned with the quality of the writing, which almost everyone agrees is usually bad; what interests him is the climate of thought that emerges from these seas of turgid prose. In his three most important chapters he examines, under various heads, the way in which SF writers deal with such basic questions as sex, politics, religion and art, and what kinds of world take form from their imagination. His conclusions are rather grim; we seem to be heading towards a quasi-Fascist, male-dominated, technology-ruled Utopia more sterile than exciting.

By excluding fantasy almost entirely from his survey Mr. Amis has lost the opportunity of dealing with some excellent stories where the extrapolation has been not so much along scientific as along sociological or philosophic lines. I would have thought James Blish's *A Case of Conscience*, for example, in its original form as a long-short, rated more attention than he has given it. However, he has ruled this kind of story outside his terms of reference. In any case we SF-addicts, who may now come out

in the open with our vice as if we read detective-stories, may well be thankful for this entertaining study of our drug.

Publishers in England are said to be shy of science-fiction at the moment. I hope Mr. Amis's book will help to change their views; but I fear the latest two examples of the art to reach me will hardly do so. One is a new short novel by Frederik Pohl, whom Mr. Amis calls "the most consistently able writer science-fiction, in the modern sense, has yet produced." *Slave Ship* takes place at some unspecified future date when the whole Western world, including the Russian bloc, is at war with the Caodai sect that originated in Vietnam but has now begun to carve out a kind of Holy Roman Empire. It is the story of a young officer in the U.S. Navy posted to a secret station where animals are being trained—on the lines used by Dr. Lorenz in his conversations with birds—to operate weapons of war. In a climax that reminded me of the work of the late Herbert Strang, the hero and his performing dogs, apes and seals

BEHIND THE SCENES



15—CLIFFORD HATTS
TV designer of every kind of show from "Music for You" to "Othello."

capture the Caodai "Pope," and the book ends with a tantalizing reference to interference from the planet Venus. The "barbed satire" that the blurb promises us is confined to some rather obvious invention about the future status of striptease, drug-addiction and pacifism. Mr. Pohl can do much better than this, even without his late partner Mr. Kornbluth.

The other new offering is a reprint of Poe's early romance with the extraordinary irrelevant annex that Jules Verne felt himself impelled to add to it. The Poe story is splendidly horrific; the Verne addendum is full of this sort of thing—

"Our lieutenant hasn't his match afloat," Hurliguerly said to me.

"Indeed," I replied, "he seems to be a born seaman."

"And then, our *Halbrane*, what a ship! Congratulate yourself, Mr. Jeorling, that I got the captain to change his mind about you."

"If it was you who did it, Boatswain, I thank you heartily."

Later on they eat penguins. "Their flesh is just as good as chicken," says Hurliguerly in a typically Verneque wish-fulfilment.

NEW NOVELS

The Absence of a Cello. Ira Wallach. *Gollancz*, 15/-

The Atom Station. Halldor Laxness (trans. Magnus Magnusson). *Methuen*, 16/-

A Strange Solitude. Philippe Sollers (trans. Richard Howard). *Eyre & Spottiswoode*, 15/-

The Right Hand Man. James Tucker. *Chapman & Hall*, 15/-

Like Mr. Peter de Vries, Mr. Ira Wallach writes sociological farces, penetrating studies of American mores with a glittering surface of tessellated jokes. *The Absence of a Cello*, though it deals with the morality of conformism, is a gay book. I enjoyed it very much and laughed a lot. But instead of being, like the older funny novel, set in an imaginary world without serious cares, it is set right in the middle of contemporary anxieties. The hero is a physicist who is being looked over by a personnel snooper on behalf of a giant corporation. The scene is a New York apartment, with neighbours and relatives and a good deal of highbrow-bohemian fun; but the analysis of a corporation's attitude to the brains it buys is as ruthless and disturbing as Miss Compton-Burnett's analysis of the Family. Perhaps, indeed, the Family has been replaced by the Corporation as the central unit in fiction, the field in which the interplay of appetites produces both comedy and melodrama. Mr. Wallach's *New Yorkers*

can reject offers of financial security because they are feckless. It would be a pity if we are developing into a society where only the feckless are free.

The Atom Station is by a Nobel Prize winner. Translated from the Icelandic, it reveals a side of the Nordic talent I had not met before. The narrator is a maid from the country who takes service in the house of a liberal-minded politician. The government are plotting to sell the country to America for an atomic base and to distract attention from this treason bring home from exile the bones of an Icelandic hero. In a number of short, grotesque scenes Communists, policemen, farmers and businessmen are displayed, behaving characteristically. Indeed, the narrator has a child by one of them. A little like Anatole France and a little like Mr. Linklater, this odd work, though obviously losing a great deal divested of its own language, is mildly entertaining and unexpected; but the political satire and the wild farce seem old-fashioned and heavy handed.

A Strange Solitude is commended all over its dust-jacket by such varied sponsors as Messieurs Mauriac and Aragon. It is a very short, assured account of a youth's love affair with a Spanish nursemaid, besprinkled with resounding generalizations about Love and Youth and Memory. It revives in a modern setting the image of the lover's solitude, of the student enslaved by passion: the Romantic Movement lives again. The states of mind produced by the love affair in a boy of sixteen are described unconvincingly but, worse, their intrinsic value is blown up until the inefficiency in personal relations of the inexperienced comes to be taken as a cosmic symbol. The student's excitement with the Spanishness of his love adds an interest to the little novel.

Mr. Tucker's first book gave the very lowest lowdown on provincial journalism.

Now in *The Right Hand Man* he exposes the fight for power in the South Wales Division of the Coal Board. This is a much more professional job and the fate of the defeated clerk who is suddenly picked to become the personal assistant of the tough, go-getting Sector General Manager held my attention comfortably. One day, I suppose, accounts of officials being unpleasant to one another will pall; but at the moment it is as sure-fire a literary genre as exposures of teenage morals. The setting that suits Mr. Tucker is a party when the alert underling can help one boss to score off another. A rather uncertain change of key at the end shows he is best at the moment when recording weaknesses. — R. G. G. PRICE

WAR AT SEA

The Battle of the Atlantic. Donald Macintyre. Batsford, 21/-

The Battle of Matapan. S. W. C. Pack. Batsford, 21/-

These are the latest in the Batsford "British Battles" series and the standard is well maintained.

It cannot have been easy to compress into a balanced story the Atlantic battle, which lasted over three years and ranged over a vast area from the Equator to Greenland. On its outcome depended at first our survival and later our ability to carry the war into enemy territory; the author rightly quotes Sir Winston Churchill as saying "The only thing that ever really frightened me during the war was the U-boat peril."

The broad story is the usual one in British history, of beginning a war with utterly inadequate resources. There was also the false conception that it was more offensive to look for needles in haystacks by "patrol" than to concentrate all available escorts and aircraft in close support of the convoy, where the killings were to be made. It is regrettable that Professor

Blackett's operational research deductions took so long to win acceptance. The ebb and flow of the battle was largely governed by changes in tactics and weapon devices, which put first one side on top and then the other, but a vital factor was the formation of a "band of brothers" in selected groups, whose captains knew at once what was wanted.

A minor criticism is that although rough weather is mentioned in the text, most of the photographs of British ships show reasonable conditions. Atlantic weather for a small ship, trying to operate and think, was often a most formidable enemy.

In contrast to the broad Atlantic story, *Matapan* tells of three day's intensive operations in the Mediterranean. Captain Pack has drawn considerably on the impressions of other eyewitnesses, from Admiral Cunningham downwards, to give life to the bare bones of the story. The result is an accurate and readable account of the confusions that arose at sea when radar was in its infancy, aircraft reports of ships' positions and identities were usually suspect and the plotting of destroyers' positions in a confused night action was carried out by hand. The operations, as a whole, failed by a narrow margin in their main purpose of sinking the Italian battleship *Vittorio Veneto*. The decisive night action against the cruisers, although exciting at the time, was not a "battle" — it was a massacre.

Captain Pack's account brings out the chivalry that characterized all Admiral Cunningham's actions with the Italian Navy. When they were afloat, he was ruthless in his duty to destroy them. Once they were sunk, he took exceptional steps to help survivors. On the whole, this is a good story of the last old-fashioned naval action. Its outcome kept the Italian fleet in harbour during the critical evacuations from Greece and Crete.

— G. B.

HOMO SAPIENS

Man: The Known and Unknown. John Langdon-Davies. Secker and Warburg, 21/-
Mankind in the Making. William Howells. Secker and Warburg, 35/-

Here Mr. Langdon-Davies is urging almost too exhaustively the duty of accepting newly proven scientific fact, however unwelcome, the scorn eventually poured on eminent thinkers of their day who rejected the movement of the earth round the sun, for instance, or the circulation of the blood, being held up as a terrible example to our own die-hards.

Logically enough the writer supports a case for the reality of extra-sensory perception—E.S.P.—basing his opinion on the average results of an immense number of experiments that of their very nature cannot be reproduced at will for the benefit of scientists accustomed only to mechanistic evaluation. From here he passes to recognition of many possibles and probables in the worlds of



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nature and of spirit—thought transference, unorthodox medicine, witchcraft and even stranger notions. So far one may perhaps sympathize but unfortunately he attempts, disastrously, to clinch his argument with incidents from personal experience with professional mediums. This is a pity in view of the sound argument for his general proposition.

Mr. Howells presents the tale of the fossils, woefully full of gaps at critical junctures, interpreted in terms of modern Man. It is so technical in phrasing as to be mainly a text-book but so light-hearted in spirit as to be readable by anyone who really rather likes huge mouthfuls of ungainly great words. The author himself specially commends "tuberculosectorial." The ease with which he deals in casual millions of years, speeding up or slowing down the process of evolution to bear on whichever theories of development he is conscientiously exploring, does almost evoke sympathy for the author of the Piltdown hoax, here chronicled in cheerful detail. His final conclusions point to physical descent not as in one clear line but on a multitude of interlocking channels. To some of us it may seem that both these writers are floundering for lack of the conception of a unifying creative mind not constrained in Time.

— C. CONWAY PLUMBE

A DIRECTOR'S BOYHOOD

The Days Were Too Short. Marcel Pagnol. Hamish Hamilton, 25/-

It is fascinating to see in these memories of his happy childhood where Marcel Pagnol got his material for such splendid satires on French provincial life as *La Femme du Boulanger*. He was the son of devoted and adored parents, his father a gentle and upright schoolmaster who was fierce only in his atheism and his strange horror of alcohol. They lived in Marseilles, and rented with a sporting uncle a broken-down house in the hills, where his father took to shooting with an ancestral twelve-bore, and young Pagnol—he was eight—was instructed in country lore by a poaching friend from the village. His recollection of his family is in the affectionate and revealing spirit of Clarence Day. Long afterwards on location he found that the château chosen by his assistants was the one that had struck terror into him as a child. This is a funny and charming book, very successfully translated by Rita Barisse. But someone should explain to her the difference between a rifle and a gun.

— ERIC KEOWN

S.I.B.

Foreign Assignment. C. V. Hearn. Robert Hale, 16/-

Mr. Hearn was obviously born to be a policeman. From the Surrey Constabulary he was called up in 1939 into what was then known as the C.M.P. Shortly afterwards he was transferred to

the newly formed Special Investigation Branch, in which he served with great distinction in North Africa and Italy. His book is less an autobiography than a case-book, in which the author, though closely and often dangerously involved in the action, remains morally aloof. "It was not our job," he says, "to sit back and split hairs, but to dive in and, if necessary, split skulls." Mr. Hearn plainly preferred the skulls and, save for a few copy-book maxims, his descriptions of crime and violence carry no hint of any moral judgment. Many of his exploits make exciting reading, but such cold-blooded devotion to duty, though doubtless admirable, is a bit off-putting. Mr. Hearn, in fact, must have been a proper terror, and his book can be warmly recommended to all ex-O.R.s with a taste for masochism.

— JOCELYN BROOKE



"Weren't you ever young, mother?"

BLOOD COUNT

Trial by Ordeal. Osmington Mills. Bles, 13/6. While local pyromaniac slumbers near by, rich old eccentric is found murdered in blazing room. Squire and his relations, eccentric and his relations, devotees of goddess Kali, the police themselves—all are suspect at different times. Diffuse but crammed with ideas (I especially liked the homosexual's forecast of a day when all targets of the law would combine to gum up the works) and five surprise endings. Most amusing.

Night's Black Agent. John Bingham. Gollancz, 13/6. Journalist's account of blackmail's effect on two victims, retired Civil Servant and blustering G.P. The former, an innocent in the toils of tough police interrogation, is most convincing, and the story moves smoothly along. The only flaw is the villain, a shadowy figure who is said to be deadly efficient but just seems terribly lucky.

Home is the Prisoner. Jean Potts. Gollancz, 13/6. Having served six years for manslaughter of business partner, Jim Singley returns to small American town containing self-righteous wife, re-married

mistress, etc.: and stirs up old troubles. Slightly thin story, but very solid people.

Face of Fortune. James Workman. Hodder and Stoughton, 15/-. Almost the same story, except that it's set in Australia, the characters are thinner and the story silder and enlivened by a vivid turn of phrase.

What Ever Happened to Baby Jane? Henry Farrell. Eyre and Spottiswoode, 13/6. A real nasty. Ex-child-star, grown frumpish, persecutes younger sister, ex-adult-star, still beautiful but crippled, with little horribleness in revenge for her success. They are isolated in a vast Hollywood house and the cripple cannot get help. Another nasty twist at the end.

The Unspeakable. Stephen Ransome. Gollancz, 13/6. Neurotic press photographer, convalescing from breakdown in yet another small American town, is suspected by efficient policeman of murder of small child. His alibi is the policeman's wife. Sounds run-of-the-mill, but is redeemed by documentary likeliness of the people involved. Good pay-off. — PETER DICKINSON



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BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE

FOR WOMEN



My Next Husband—VII

MY husband is a clergyman of the Church of England. I hope that my next husband will also be a clergyman, for reasons which I shall give later. But there will have to be a number of changes. First of all my present husband is a High Churchman. This means that he rises at half past five one day and half past six the next. This would not be so bad if he did not expect his breakfast to be on the table on his return, at eight o'clock one day and seven o'clock every other day. Furthermore, and far worse, he considers it his duty to be available to his people at all times, even in the middle of the night. When he first put an extension telephone into the bedroom I was foolishly delighted. I had visions of lying majestically in bed and ordering the groceries at some civilized hour like nine o'clock. But when he fitted up a kind of fire gong over the bed so that parishioners could summon him by ringing the night bell long after all reasonable people were asleep, I feared the worst, and, indeed, I have experienced it. I now have all the disadvantages of living with a doctor husband who is an habitual early riser, if you can imagine such a man.

I have, however, fortunately learned that Low Churchmen consider all this early rising smacks of Popery (which is probably why my present husband

does it) and furthermore, expect their parishioners to die peacefully in their beds without priestly interference. Long practice in listening intently to ecclesiastical monologues has also taught me that these excellent Low Church clergymen are confined to specific areas, and I shall definitely look for my next partner in Islington.

I think I could bear all this disturbance of my needed rest with reasonable equanimity, because all my afternoons are free while George goes visiting, and I can put my feet up for a blissful two hours until my youngest daughter comes home from school seven miles away. But, unfortunately, George also feels it to be his duty to deal with the young. This not only keeps him out to indecent hours at rock 'n' roll sessions at the Church Hall but unfortunately gets him into the habit of debating ferociously any simple household point which I am foolish enough to raise. Every now and then, to be fair, he becomes rather sorry about this and explains that he gets into his argumentative habit because he considers it essential to tackle the young on their premises. I have tried to point out that I am no longer young and that I like a little peace on my premises, but so far in vain.

You may well wonder why I should contemplate seeking another clergyman

for my second husband. The answer is quite simple. First and foremost, alone among the friends of my schooldays, I have no money worries. Most of them are married to wealthy stockbrokers and business consultants and such and are simply worried to death over money. They have so much of it and the Government apparently takes it all off them in order to educate my children free. I do admit that it seems most unfair, but I really don't see what George and I can do about it, especially as with three children, an aged relative, and allowance for stamps and collars, we don't pay any income tax at all, let alone surtax and some frightful imposition called Schedule "A."

But I have saved the best until last. The wonderful glorious days are when the children are home for the holidays. John is reading Philosophy under Professor Ayer at Oxford, Alison at Bedford, and Jane is chairman of her school debating society. They all still cheerfully go to church, but, after evensong, there comes that splendid time when the sermon is carefully dissected, line for line and word for word. Sometimes I am even called in to my poor harassed George's defence, and those are moments I treasure for days to come.

So it will probably be another clergyman for me next time. I say "probably" because Jane has recently sown doubts in my mind. She told me the other day that when the Sixth Form discussed what they wanted to be in later life, the overwhelming vote went to a girl who plunged for being a clergyman's widow. Perhaps she has something after all.

— DOREEN PARSONS

Unfair Sex

OTHER women's husbands never
Strike me as unduly clever
Or particularly charming,
Dashing, daring or disarming.
Other women's husbands' faces
Seem to me to bear no traces
Of the really vital sparks;
(Similarly their remarks).
Am I, though, my conscience grousing,
Down on other women's spouses
Just because they indiscriminately married other women?

— HAZEL TOWNSON

National Love Insurance

DON'T get me wrong; there are a bunch of things over here in England that I think are really great, but sometimes I get teed off with the way you British will get a good thing going and then just drop it. Take this National Insurance bit—it's a swell idea, but you stop with health. I know as sure as shooting that if ever the U.S. latches on to your plan, it won't be long before we have something like National Holiday Insurance, protecting us from other Americans while touring Europe, or National Status Insurance, protecting our investments in foreign sports cars. For Pete's sake, don't let the U.S. get the better of you in a field where you have such a head start. For instance, I've got an idea that should really swing over here; how about National Love Insurance?

All you have to do is knock another deduction off the weekly pay; most people won't even notice one more or less. And then you print up a lot of official-looking ("said persons" and "aforementioned," etc.) forms called Serious Intentions Claims. You get the guy and his girl to sign one—that will make two people happy, her and her mother—and then they start collecting.

Start off with courtship, which is usually pretty expensive. See, you give the two a whole bunch of coupons. Then the fellow can get her flowers and candy, they can go to the movies cheap, and he gets a cut on the price of gas. She can buy some clothes and stock up on stuff for the new home. You'll have to set up a string of national stores; call them HOPE CHESTS or something schmaltzy. They can get more coupons with a written recommendation from a doctor.

When the guy pops the question, you have them show the written proposal and then give them the rings. Get this; have the rings fitted by your N.H.I. people who aren't busy taking out foreigners' appendixes. And keep the human touch; give them back the proposal as a souvenir, maybe even framed.

The weddings can really be a blast. Dignified, though, of course. Start with an Office Collection Bonus. Give

them the gowns and top hats. Let them invite a hundred people each, and give these people coupons for wedding presents. Then every month have a big mass wedding. Use the biggest church of each religion (like Westminster Abbey) and let the Lord Mayor run the civil marriages. How about an off-season bonus to avoid the June rush? Huge receptions can be held, with name bands and people like Adam Faith singing, and everyone will have a ticket for a good feed and enough booze for a couple of toasts. Then give the newly-marrieds passes on British Railways for honeymoons; they can stay in the remote hotels that aren't doing so well.

So we've got them hitched, but N.L.I. doesn't stop now. There will be automatic anniversary gifts every year. They can pay a little extra and get annual remembrances of their first date, first lovers' quarrel, etc. And free counselling, of course. Trips home to Mother can be tossed in, too. But the biggest deal will be the Happy Marriage Bonus. See, give them an annual bonus for every year they

manage to stick together, and see what happens to the divorce statistics!

But suppose a marriage hits the rocks, and they decide to call it quits. Then N.L.I. can pay legal fees and alimony. And throw in a Second Try List, a catalogue (illustrated, Technicolor) of available males and females—get them over the hump and back in circulation.

Let's say someone just doesn't dig marriage—okay, have a Conscientious Objectors Claim; anyone that signs it doesn't have to chip in on the insurance. And limit the plan to the people who pay in, or England will be for marriages what Reno is at home for divorces. Here's a neat catch; the Diminishing Returns Clause. With each wedding the benefits decrease, and after the fifth wedding the applicant is on his own. So much for opportunists!

Here's why I think this love insurance would really click. Now people don't want to pay into something unless they're going to get something back, right? So with N.L.I. the people who might have stayed single and raised chrysanthemums or something are all going to head for the nearest altar. You used to be a maritime power; now you'll be a married-time power. And believe me, you'll have caught the Yanks with their pants down!

— JUDITH KREUSER



"Gosh, Susan—has anyone ever told you what beautiful L.P.s you've got?"

Toby Competitions

No. 154—What's it for?

WRITE a letter (limit 100 words) from the original inventor of a safety pin, a trouser clip, a bootlace or a spring, to a manufacturer to interest him in the possibilities of the new device and methods of exploiting it.

A framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up receive a one-guinea book token. **Entries by Wednesday, March 1.** Address to **Toby Competitions No. 154, *Punch*, 10 Bouvierie Street, London, E.C.4.**

Report on Competition No. 151 (Film Story)

Competitors were asked for a film "story" incorporating a female bacteriologist, a man in a raincoat, a harpist, a chef on a luxury liner and a yak. Stories tended to sameness, as did jokes, e.g. "I'm all right, Yak!" Some latitude had to be granted in judging.

The winner was:

J. W. CULLEN
11 TURNBULL ROAD
CHICHESTER
SUSSEX

A Western with a scientific slant introduces Dirk Bogarde, a reporter in black leather raincoat, investigating a mysterious disease which is decimating the herds of the Lazy I.Q. Ranch,



"How was he to know it was meant for your supper?"

despite all the skill of the beautiful proprietress (Doris Day), who majored in bacteriology and rope-spinning at her college. Inspired by her blue eyes he recalls that the yaks in the Chicago Zoo are immune from the germ and aided by modern breeding methods and Champion Snowflake of Lhasa (Peter Ustinov) a hybrid is evolved which proves enormously profitable, the hair supplying sweaters for Hollywood starlets and the meat Jumbo Barbecue Steaks, converted by a secret taste-eliminating process invented by the ranchhouse cook, an ex-liner-chef (Charles Laughton). Their final embrace on the steps of their million-dollar swimming-pool fades out to celestial music (Sound track: Harpo Marx) typifying the triumph of sex and commerce.

Following are the runners-up:

A female bacteriologist, A., estranged from her husband, has a recurring nightmare about a man in a raincoat. Afraid, she dons a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles and signs on as harpist in a ship's orchestra on a luxury liner. In the middle of the Atlantic the dead-freezes break down. The captain asks A. to inspect the provisions. Introduced to the chef who repaired the refrigerating system, she recognizes her husband, B., who recognizes her. Each knows that the other knows that they know that the other knows who they really are. They hide their feelings.

A passenger falls ill. Danger of an epidemic. Panic. A. makes a serum from the liver of a yak who happens to be on board. Everyone is inoculated just in time. B. at last respects A. both as a woman and as a bacteriologist. They embrace.

Mrs. B. Tout, 72 Bedford Road, Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire

In a backstreet a man in a raincoat is smoking a tipped cigarette. He hears a scream, rushes into a tenement and finds a blonde staring at a yak. Ar Oma, a yak-harpist, explains that she was replenishing the strings with yak's hair when she discovered a woman's body. It is that of his wife, a bacteriologist, who disappeared while studying the effects of blight on yaks' eyelids.

They dare not contact the police, but Ar Oma, whose father is a chef on a luxury liner plying between Manchester and Liverpool, persuades him to take the encumbered yak across England. Then follow several hilarious incidents which would befall any gay couple on a similar mission.

Eventually Ar Oma's father stews the yak, but the happy pair are fined £2,000 for contravening the Foot and Mouth Restrictions. Ar Oma's father pays the fine and begs them to provide another appetizing yak. They refuse with a knowing smile.

Robert J. Pickles, 3 Whitham Road, Shipley, Yorkshire

Hero-Veterinary Radiographer 27, unmarried, unworldly, wears shabby clothes, usually a dirty raincoat, engrossed in his work; his one passion is to collect X-rays of many different animals to hang on his bare garret walls. He is being ardently wooed by a female bacteriologist but is quite unaware of her efforts.

His landlady's brother, a chef on a luxury liner home on leave, tells him of a yak presented by the Government of Outer Mongolia to a famous harpist after international concert tour, which was brought over on his ship. Radiographer dead keen to X-ray it.

Female bacteriologist has to perform quarantine tests on yak, and shamelessly trades her access to the animal to contrive to get it X-rayed by boy friend in return for amorous friendship.

Happy ending-marriage, and garret shared with several more X-rays on the wall.

Mrs. B. J. Williamson, "Overdale," Water Lane, Oakington, Cambs.

Female bacteriologist, Gladys, studies bacteria found on yaks. Having quarrelled with her husband, Albert, she travels by luxury liner to Tibet, to forget Albert and search for a yak that will acclimate itself to her laboratory in Hythe. Unknown to Gladys, Albert follows her, travelling incognito as a man in a raincoat. Concealing his identity even more, Albert enlists the help of Prunella, harpist in the village orchestra. Posing as Prunella's harp-stranger he hopes to deceive Gladys, but she recognizes the patch in his raincoat and begs Henrico, the luxury liner chef, to smuggle her into Tibet to search, unhindered by Albert, for a yak.

All ends happily when Henrico, hearing Prunella playing her harp, falls in love with her, and Albert disguises himself as a pre-Hythe-acclimatized yak and returns home with Gladys.

Rosemary Dawn Bashford, Ranelagh House, Tamworth Road, Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire

Book-tokens were also awarded to *Jill Raspin, Evergreen Cottage, Kirk Deighton, Nr. Wetherby, Yorks*; *R. S. White, 14 Grove Lane, Ipswich, Suffolk*; *Miss M. Chisholm, 25 St. George's Square, London, S.W.1.*

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Travel: have we gone too far?

WHAT do you do when you find a pleasant, un-tripped-to beach, or a good, cheap, uncrowded restaurant? Delightedly tell your friends? Or cover your tracks and hope they never find it?



Pierre d'Harcourt, The Observer's Travel Correspondent, must have this problem on a massive scale. When he writes of some sheltered retreat in Corsica, he is talking to over two million readers. It is, I suppose, just possible that they might all decide to go there in the same week.

Should Pierre d'Harcourt be allowed to tell? Has he gone too far? He is on expert and friendly terms with leisurely by-ways all over Europe, and quite a bit farther afield. Sometimes he is bound to give away somebody's special hair. But at least the people he gives it away to are other Observer readers, rather a nice lot by and large.

Besides, if you look on him just as a sort of super-tipster, you're missing more than half of it. He has an affectionate and perceptive way of writing about a place, and even if it happens to be *your* village, he will entertain you . . . and perhaps help you to see it more clearly.

Das Baden in Baden-Baden

Anyway, as a tipster, his work is very widely spread. He writes about a different place nearly every week in The Observer. And he answers more than 17,000 questions in readers' letters every year. He can tell you what's good about das Bad in Baden. Or how to find a Good Pullup for Carmen in Seville.

The clue to his column is in its title—"Time Off", for he has a fund of ideas about filling off-duty time, and this is a very important service, as more and more people are getting more and more time to fill.

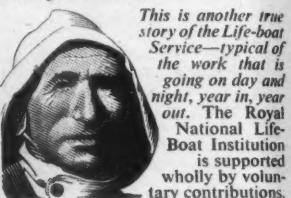
Don't let anyone tell you that he has gone too far. He is still travelling, still looking avidly for places where the people are happy to see you, and the sun shines. You'll enjoy travelling hopefully with him, week by week, in The Observer.

J.B.L.

DOCTOR TAKEN OUT TO DUTCH TANKER

GREAT YARMOUTH & GORLETON, NORFOLK. At 10.58 on the morning of the 24th March, 1960, Lloyd's agent at Great Yarmouth informed the honorary secretary that there was a sick man aboard the Dutch tanker *Mare Novum*, which was proceeding towards Yarmouth Roads. The master had asked for a life-boat to meet him with a doctor. The life-boat Louise Stephens, with a doctor on board, was launched at low water at 1.2. There was a fresh easterly wind with a heavy swell. The doctor boarded the tanker and found the patient lying in the engine room with severe internal injuries. He decided the man was in too bad a state to be landed by life-boat. The tanker entered the harbour, where the patient was taken by ambulance to hospital. The life-boat reached her station at 1.31.

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The University of Schweppshire

"OLDBRICK, fair Suckler of my Youth . . ." Who said this, of Schweppshire's University town? Oldbrick lies at the heart of what is now a thriving industrial centre, and if there are few angles from which a general impression can be gained, a good telescopic photograph such as this is perfectly possible from the radar station on Bore's Hill. Notice that Oldbrick has its traffic problem, especially where Corny and Squeeze debouch onto the High (sometimes affectionately known as the Positively Stinking). But above the old colleges display the charm of the local stone, which weathers so effectively that it does not always actually stand up—the famous façades of 'The Sides' are now permanently supported by scaffolding, though this is of a Gothic type. The problem of the new science block of All Keys (pronounced Caius) College of Explanation (an I.C.Y. Group foundation) has been solved by a building in Extravert Waterpipe, beautifully re-interpreting, in contemporary terms, the gargoyle theme of the deflection of running water.

The camera caught the tower of Old Cyril on a morning in May Week (really June) when, pleasing link, the carols are sung by the last living choristers of an ancestral University, not, now, at dawn, but after elevenses. Famous in Oldbrick literature is its river, never quite wide enough for rowing, but always preserving its bank, traditionally set aside for those who, by a system of tests, are allowed to walk about in rowing clothes.

Written by Stephen Potter; designed by George Him

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